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MUSLIM BROTHERHOODS AND SOCIAL CHANGE  
IN SOME SOCIETIES IN WEST AFRICA

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## ABSTRACT

Muslim Brotherhoods have been a prominent feature in the spread of Islam in West Africa. Missionaries and traders from North Africa brought with them the cult of baraka, a spiritual power which inhered in certain holy men and was transmitted to their disciples who formed a tariga or Sufi brotherhood. The leaders of the brotherhoods became focal points of loyalty and obedience within a network of religious centres scattered throughout West Africa. In this way the brotherhoods formed cohesive groupings over a wide geographical area which cross-cut ethnic ties. The religious obligations and ritual practices of the tarigas enabled the members to maintain close relationships with one another. As a result, the brotherhood leaders emerged as rivals of the traditional rulers who had been the patrons of the holy men. The jihads of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries aimed at eliminating those rulers and chiefs who refused to accept the stringent religious ethic advocated by the Muslim leaders and establishing in their place theocratic states under the rule of the religious reformers.

The policies pursued by the two colonial powers in the area altered the course of events. In Nigeria, the British policy of Indirect Rule gave a large measure of autonomy to the Fulani Emirs who were members of the Qadiriyya Brotherhood and had gained power through the jihad of Uthman dan Fodio. In Senegal the Muslim leaders and the semi-pagan rulers joined in an uneasy alliance to defeat the French. When Wolof resistance to the French collapsed, the Colonial Administration destroyed



the indigenous political system by replacing hereditary rulers with appointees of the central government. As a result, the Muslim leaders became the sole representatives of popular aspirations. The agricultural policy sponsored by the French enabled the Muslim leaders to rally their followers by encouraging them to engage in groundnut production. Thus, the leaders of the Muridiyya and Tijaniyya Brotherhoods managed to achieve a nodal position in the economic life of Senegal. Because of their acknowledged religious and economic position the Brotherhoods have continued to play a decisive role in Senegalese political development even after independence.

In Nigeria the Fulani Emirs discouraged brotherhood activity among their Hausa subjects. During the post-war period when Nigeria was preparing for self-government, the Fulani viewed the end of Indirect Rule as a threat to their monopoly of political power in the Northern Region. The dramatic increase in the activity of the Tijaniyya order at that time indicated the extent of popular resentment felt by the Hausa with regard to the Fulani rulers. Hence in both regions the activity of the brotherhoods is a sign and a symptom of profound social and political changes.

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# MUSLIM BROTHERHOODS AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN SOME SOCIETIES IN WEST AFRICA

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION: MUSLIM BROTHERHOODS AS AGENTS OF MOBILIZATION

Many of the sociological and anthropological studies of religion in Africa have been concerned with religious movements which are termed "nativist" or "separatist". The majority of these sectarian movements have been connected in one way or another with the activity of Christian missions during the colonial period although the process of fragmentation shows no sign of abating even after the establishment of independent states.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, full-length studies of Muslim religious movements are relatively few. Evans-Pritchard's study of the role of the Sanusiyya Brotherhood in the formation of the Libyan state still remains the point of departure for investigating the role of the various brotherhoods in the politics of those areas of Africa which either have a predominantly Muslim population or contain a substantial Muslim minority.<sup>2</sup>

Recently several monographs have appeared which deal specifically with the role of the brotherhoods in contemporary Senegal where the influence of the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya Brotherhoods has been a conspicuous feature of the political and economic landscape.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis of these authors has, for the most part, been confined to the economic and political function of the leaders of the Muridiyya Brotherhood in present-day Senegal.

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1. J.D.Y. Peel, Aladura. A Religious Movement Among the Yoruba, 1968; Bengt Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, 1964; David Barrett, Schism And Renewal in Africa, 1968.
  2. A. Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, 1969; I.M. Lewis, "Sufism in Somaliland: A Study in Tribal Islam" Bull SOAS, 1955-56, pp. 581 - 602, 145-160.
  3. L.C. Behrman, Muslim Brotherhoods and Politics in Senegal, 1970; Donal Cruise-O'Brien, The Mourides of Senegal, 1970; Tidiane Sy, La Confrerie Senegalaise des mourides, 1969.

Nevertheless, frequent reference is made to the parallel activity of two other brotherhoods, the Tijaniyya and the Qadiriyya. The Qadiriyya is the parent order of the Muridiyya and is the oldest established order in West Africa while the Tijaniyya is numerically the largest order in West Africa and in certain respects its influence is more far-reaching than that of the other two orders.

The activity of the brotherhoods has been markedly successful in West Africa south of the Sahara, so much so, that to be a Muslim is practically synonymous with membership in a brotherhood (Ar. Tariqa).<sup>4</sup> The dramatic rise in the number of adherents began in the nineteenth century although the Qadiriyya order had been active in the jihad movements which marked the history of the Islamic states in Futa Toro (Senegal) and Futa Jallon (Guinea) during the eighteenth century. Indeed the two events whose consequences have affected profoundly the influence of Islam in West Africa are the celebrated jihad of the Fulbe Qadiri leader Uthman Dan Fodio which was waged in Hausaland between 1804 and 1810, and the jihad of the Tokolor leader al-Hajj Umar whose military conquests between 1853 and 1864 spread the Tijaniyya order throughout the Western Sudan. This process of Islamic expansion and consolidation resulted in the formation of theocratic states which embraced large amounts of territory containing ethnic groups who at times were mutually hostile toward one another.

With the advent of the colonial powers, the process of state formation underwent considerable alteration. The recently established Tijani states in Senegal and Mali were abolished, while the Fulani state set up

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<sup>4</sup> J.S. Trimingham, The History of Islam in West Africa, 1962, p.159

by Dan Fodio was absorbed into the indirect rule system which united disparate ethnic groups in the new Colony of Nigeria. Thus, in the French system the indigenous political system was dismantled while the British kept intact the theocratic basis of Fulani rule by recognising the authority of the Emirs who were the successors of Dan Fodio. In both cases the native populations had to reconcile themselves to the new power alignments imposed upon them. New patterns of interaction were called for, which in several instances led to ambivalent results. On the one hand, the centralization of authority under the aegis of the European rulers and the introduction of modern means of communication and agricultural production increased the possibility of interaction cutting across tribal and ethnic boundaries. On the other hand, the new criteria governing the allocation of positions of power and authority brought about competition not only between members of different ethnic groups but also between members of the same group.<sup>5</sup> The intensity of competition and rivalry would depend on the degree of autonomy allowed to the indigenous authority structure by the colonial regime. In a situation where considerable authority is left in the hands of traditional ethnic or tribal leaders, the formal political system of the group remains intact beneath the veneer of the colonial administration.<sup>6</sup> Hence competition for office in such a system will be articulated in terms of traditional idioms such as hereditary rank, kinship, and client relationships. Similarly, the external posture of the group vis a vis outside

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<sup>5</sup> See M.G. Smith, "Historical and Cultural Conditions of Political Corruption Among the Hausa", Comparative Studies in Society and History, VI, 2 (1964).

<sup>6</sup> Behrman, op. cit., pp.87 - 89; pp. 99 - 102



groups will assume a rather monolithic stance due to the unity created by the perduring system of authority and administration. This type of system is exemplified by the Fulani Sokoto Caliphate in Northern Nigeria under British rule.

If, however, the indigenous political system is radically altered, or replaced by a new political apparatus directly controlled by the colonial power, then the new situation demands new methods of recruitment for administration office, new criteria for the allocation of prestige roles. Hence, in such a system more emphasis is placed on personal achievement rather than on ascribed status since the colonial administration has already prevented the traditional system from operating as a formal political apparatus. Nevertheless, even in ideal conditions, the new administrative power elite still requires support from the population in order to facilitate the exercise of authority. To win this support and strengthen the claim to legitimacy the ruling elite attempts to utilize symbols and slogans which are culturally apposite but at the same time cut across ethnic or class boundaries. Since the elite have been installed in office by the colonial administration which ostensibly seeks to decrease tribal feeling, any appeal to tribal or ethnic loyalties would be self defeating for a broadly-based formal political system. This situation is illustrated by the government of Senegal where the Christian Leopold Senghor is supported by the rural Muslim population. By sedulously showing deference to the leading marabouts (Muslim religious leaders), Senghor has captured the vital rural vote while at the same time he has effectively neutralized potential

Muslim opposition.<sup>7</sup> For this reason religious activity has remained informal and religious leaders exercise political influence only indirectly.

Similarly in Northern Nigeria religious opposition to the formal political system maintained by the system of indirect rule was neutralised by the assurances given by the British to respect the Islamic character of the Fulani system. As a concrete token of their respect, the British curtailed the activity of Christian missions in Fulani territory thereby severely limiting educational opportunities in the north. Such a situation was consonant with the British aim of bolstering the authority of the Emirs by making the emirate system an integral part of the machinery of the colonial regime. As a result there would be a single government in which the emirs and their subordinate officials had well defined duties and an acknowledged status.<sup>8</sup> Through such a policy the colonial government was "islamized" to a large extent in the Northern Region of Nigeria. Any challenge to the authority of the government would be interpreted as a challenge to the preferential treatment accorded to Muslim beliefs and institutions. Thus the utilization of a religious idiom as a rallying standard in a program of opposition or reform was neutralized to a considerable extent.

This process of neutralization evolved in different ways depending on the structural conditions which existed in Senegal and in Northern Nigeria. By focussing on the activity and growth of Muslim brotherhoods among the Wolof in Senegal and among the Hausa in Northern Nigeria, this

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<sup>7</sup> Walter E. Stewart, "Indirect Rule and the Political System in Northern Nigeria", Acta Africana, II, 2 (1970), 50 - 84.

<sup>8</sup> M. Crowder, The Story of Nigeria, 1962, p.245.

thesis hopes to illustrate the function of informal interest groups in maintaining and adapting a traditional social system in the face of changes introduced by a formal political system, first under colonial auspices, and secondly under the leadership of a native elite after independence.<sup>9</sup> By examining the policies of the brotherhoods during certain critical junctures in the recent history of Senegal and Nigeria, the brotherhoods themselves will be seen as informal interest groups attempting to preserve ethnic and religious integrity in the face of economic and political changes which threatened to affect the foundations of Wolof and Hausa society.<sup>10</sup>

Overt political opposition to the imposition of colonial rule was suppressed in Senegal and in Hausaland by military means. In 1886 the defeat of the Wolof leaders at Dekkile opened up the interior of Senegal to the French, while the defeat of the Sultan of Sokoto at the Battle of Burmi in 1903 put an end to the independent empire of Uthman Dan Fodio.<sup>11</sup> During this time of defeat and humiliation Islam, which had previously been confined to certain elitist groups and had only superficially affected the mass of the native population, began to penetrate the peasant population of Hausaland. At the same time the former pagan warrior class in Senegal embraced the faith which they had once bitterly opposed. As a result, practically all the Wolof became Muslim in the period between 1880

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<sup>9</sup> See A. Cohen, op. cit. 1969 for an explanation of what is meant by "formal" and "informal" interest groups, pp.3 ff.

<sup>10</sup> O'Brien op. cit., pp.32 - 35.

<sup>11</sup> Crowder, op. cit., p.228

and 1927. As for Nigeria, one author states that fifty per cent of the Hausa were pagan at the time of the British occupation while by the 1960's eighty per cent were Muslim.<sup>12</sup>

The process of islamization has been effected mainly through the agency of three brotherhoods; the Qadiriyya, the Muridiyya, and the Tijaniyya. The dissemination of the brotherhoods in West Africa seems to be the result of the activity of certain Moorish clerical tribes who served as propagators of the sufistic type of clerical Islam which characterizes the Maghreb. As a result of this contact Islam in the Western Sudan has been stamped with the cult of baraka (Ar. "blessing"), a religious power or charism which inheres in certain leaders or holy men. Thus religious leadership among Muslim groups became associated with a divine power which was handed down through a chain of spiritual masters (silsilat-ul-baraka). This power was shared by the followers of the saint or spiritual master (Ar. muqaddam) through a ritual formula (Ar. wird) which is an expression of membership in a particular brotherhood.<sup>13</sup>

In the nineteenth century several religious leaders affiliated to the Qadiriyya or Tijaniyya orders embarked on military careers which culminated in the establishment of a Fulani-ruled state in Hausaland and several Tijani states in what is now Senegal and Mali.<sup>14</sup> The linking of religious movements with military and political power has historical precedents in West Africa and for this reason the colonial governments

<sup>12</sup> Trimingham, op. cit. 1969, p.230

<sup>13</sup> See the Articles "Tasawwuf" and "Tariqa" by L. Massignon in The Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam eds. H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, 1961, pp.578 - 583 and 573 - 578.

<sup>14</sup> J. Abun-Nasr, The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World, 1965, p.100.

tended to view with suspicion the reforming zeal of the native religious leader (in Senegal, marabout; in Nigeria, malam). This situation was altered in Senegal when the French sought the support of religious leaders to further the economic designs of the mother country with respect to the export of groundnuts.<sup>15</sup> As a result, in Senegal, tariqa membership became linked with two factors: first, the preservation of traditional ethnic values, and secondly, the economic policy of the central government which favoured the communal organization of the brotherhoods as a means of rapid exploitation of land suitable for growing groundnuts. Under such conditions the marabouts filled the double role of religious leaders and farming magnates.

In Nigeria on the other hand, the traditional ruling elite was left intact apart from the removal of those emirs who had resisted the British occupation of the Hausa States. As a result the Muslim leaders, to a large extent, preserved their political autonomy under the overall authority of a British Lieutenant Governor. British policy with regard to the individual emirates was implemented through the agency of a resident officer who avoided being over-conspicuous in public. In this highly structured system of government, the role of the malam (Hausa equivalent of marabout) is severely restricted. Authority and rank in Hausa society depended directly on kinship with or descent from the Fulani ruling families rather than on religious expertise. M.G. Smith describes the situation in Zaria Emirate which may serve as a model of the Hausa system:

With the exceptions of title holders drawn from the slave families already referred to, there are disproportionately few non-Fulani who hold or are

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<sup>15</sup> Behrman, op. cit., pp.35 ff.

eligible for ranks of this central series; that is to say, with due regard to the diminishing circles of eligibility, linked with the increasing order of importance of the offices concerned, it is true to say that the central series of titles and offices which form so important an element in the Emirate's political structure, are usually attainable only by members of a class whose basis is Fulani descent.<sup>16</sup>

Thus the ruling class in the Hausa states is based on ethnic ties and descent from Muslim reformers and conquerors associated with the jihad of Uthman dan Fodio. This group composes the sarakuna class who are entitled to hold the highest offices in the Fulani system. However, the vast majority of the population of the Fulani empire are peasants, traders, and urban craftsmen who comprise the talakawa or commoner class. The main means for a talaka or commoner to attain prestige in this formal stratified society is through religious observance either as a malam conspicuous for "Arabic learning" or, if he is wealthy, through pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>17</sup>

From this brief summary, it is evident that the position of the Wolof and Hausa was comparable in a number of important respects. Both societies had long been in contact with Islam but the strict observance of Muslim religious obligations was confined to ritual specialists (marabouts and malams). Both societies were mainly subsistence agriculturalists although many Hausa were engaged in long distance trade which resulted in a considerable Hausa diaspora from Timbuktu to Kumasi. Both societies faced the advent of a colonial power which threatened the fabric of traditional society. However the British policy of indirect rule

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<sup>16</sup> M.G. Smith, The Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria, 1955, p.91.

<sup>17</sup> E.R. Yeld, "Islam and Social Stratification in Nigeria", British Journal of Sociology XI (1960), 119; A. Cohen, op. cit., 1969, pp.170-171.



sharply differentiated the political evolution of Northern Nigeria from that of Senegal. Hence the growth and development of the Muslim brotherhoods as informal interest groups shows several interesting variations in the two areas. Even though the same brotherhood may be active in the two regions, its function and influence develop in quite different ways. Nevertheless in both regions the Muslim brotherhoods are concerned with the preservation of customs and traditions which are considered essential to the practice of "true Islam". But as Trimingham points out, "true Islam" in West Africa manifests wide divergencies from area to area.<sup>18</sup>

The pliability and adaptability of Islam allows it to function at one and the same time as a reforming or revolutionary movement and as a guardian of custom and tradition. The twin functions of reform and conservation generate a consciousness of a wider religious universe. Communal ritual activity broadens the conceptions of group relationships and personal integrity. This "democratization" of belief is expressed in the proposition "All Muslims are equal before God."<sup>19</sup> In this context Muslim brotherhoods share, to a certain extent, the aims of the millenarian cults of the South Pacific and the Ethiopian and Zionist Churches of Africa.

But it is this heightened sense of belonging that gives rise to the problem which is variously termed tribalism, ethnicity, parochialism, or even fanaticism, which, from time to time, have had disastrous consequences

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<sup>18</sup> Trimingham, The Influence of Islam upon Africa, 1968, p.66.

<sup>19</sup> J. Andre, Islam Noir, 1924, p.61.

in the political development of newly independent states. Clifford Geertz calls these foci of cleavages in traditional societies "primordial sentiments", i.e., expressions of identity and solidarity in terms of blood ties, race, region, religion, custom and language. These sentiments are "givens" of social existence and at times have an enormous power of coercion in and of themselves.<sup>20</sup> In a very real sense these idioms of mobilization are concerned with power. In particular, religious systems have as their major focus the ordering of different kinds of power which is expressed in a code of beliefs or systems of ritual. As Kenelm Burridge says: "These truths are community truths, truths which command a consensus. From them are derived the sets of moral imperatives, obligations, and rules of conduct to which men, because they live in community, subject themselves."<sup>21</sup>

The operative word in the statement above community which in the Senegalese and Hausa context cannot be understood in the sense of Redfield's "Small Community" which is a relatively homogeneous, self-sufficient, distinctive grouping.<sup>22</sup> For both the Wolof and Hausa had developed under the political structure of centralized states which had a considerable geographical spread. Secondly the circulation of Fulani and Tokolor religious elites within the Wolof and Hausa ambit, as well as the Hausa involvement in long distance trade, assured a wide network of

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<sup>20</sup> Clifford Geertz, "Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States" in his Old Societies and New States, 1963 p.109; 112 - 113.

<sup>21</sup> K. Burridge, New Heaven, New Earth, 1969, pp.5 - 6.

<sup>22</sup> Redfield, The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture,

communication and interaction between different linguistic groups. Even today the ruling dynasty of Sokoto is referred to as Toronkawa, indicating their provenance in Futa Toro in northern Senegal. Finally, the incorporation of great numbers of Wolof and Hausa into the Muslim community of believers through adherence to a tarica added an inter-ethnic dimension to community consciousness. This community is essentially an ideal way of looking at things and not merely an expression of local loyalty. It is in this sense that a Muslim brotherhood is a community.

The rapid growth of the brotherhoods during the colonial period may be viewed as a communal response to new power alignments within the political system. The new alignments between colonial rulers and subject peoples introduced new rules and regulations which modified, restricted, or abolished traditional institutions and patterns of political behaviour. The coercive system introduced by the colonial power prevented expressions of dissent in a formal political idiom. On the other hand, the brotherhoods with their emphasis on ritual activity and other worldly goals stood outside the political system. The more the complicated apparatus of the colonial administration impinged upon the world of the Wolof or Hausa peasant, so much the more did the peasant seek means to reassure himself against the seemingly arbitrary use of power by an alien and distant central authority. It is in this situation of uncertainty and threat that religious leaders achieve a nodal or liminal position in the process of communication between rulers and subjects. As healers, diviners, and spiritual guides armed with the mysterious power of baraka,

the Muslim holy men are able to integrate large numbers of people into informal groupings through emotionally charged face-to-face relations in a ritual context.<sup>22</sup>

In certain respects the granting of independence to African states was even more traumatic than the imposition of colonial rule. Geertz points out that the independence movement with its ideology of modernization has actually strengthened the force of "primordial sentiments:"

This thrusting of a modern political consciousness upon the mass of a still largely unmodernized population does indeed tend to lead to the stimulation and maintenance of a very intense popular interest in the affairs of government. But, as a primordially based 'corporate feeling of oneness' remains the fons et origo of legitimate authority—the meaning of the term 'self' in self-rule — much of this interest takes the form of an obsessive concern with the relation of one's tribe, region, sect, or whatever to a center of power that, while growing rapidly more active, is not easily either insulated from the web of primordial attachments, as was the remote colonial regime, or assimilated to them as are the workaday authority systems of the 'little community'. Thus, it is the very process of the formation of a sovereign civil state that, among other things, stimulates sentiments of parochialism, communalism, racialism, and so on, because it introduces into society a valuable new prize over which to fight and frightening new force with which to contend.<sup>23</sup>

While the above statement contains a number of insights, it is not universally true. Membership in a communal group, in this case a Muslim brotherhood, need not necessarily result in an "obsessive concern with the relation of that group to the center of power". Indeed membership in a brotherhood seems to be a movement away from parochial norms towards western standards.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Compare Cohen, 1969, op. cit., pp.168 and 179.

<sup>23</sup> Geertz, op. cit. 1963, p.120.

<sup>24</sup> H.J. Fisher, "Separatism in West Africa" in J. Kritzke and W.H. Lewis eds. Islam in Africa, 1969, pp. 127 - 140.

The Tijaniyya, Muridiyya, and Qadiriyya brotherhoods, despite differences in ritual and organization are similar in that they incarnate the divine supernatural force which governs the affairs of mankind. This mystical power, baraka, has become a potent mobilizing element in the confrontation of crises which threaten the traditional order of things. The one who possesses baraka becomes the object of reverence and through his intercession the success of crops, commercial ventures, and marital unions is assured. The importance of the holy man is illustrated by a Moroccan writer of the nineteenth century: "Without them ( the walis or saints), the sky would not send rain, the earth would not cause its plants to grow, and calamity would pour upon the inhabitants of the earth . . . ." <sup>25</sup> Baraka, when it is transmitted by a saint to his disciples, becomes the nucleus of a new community bound together by submission to the authority of a shaikh whose person reincarnates the baraka of the original founder. This process resembles Turner's communitas, a social bond that does not quite fit into the structural pattern of the particular society; in this case, the formal political system with its well defined categories of roles and statuses. The Muslim holy men and their disciples form a communitas which, in Turner's words:

. . . breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority. It is almost everywhere held to be sacred or 'holy' possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Abun-Nasr, op. cit., pp.5 - 6, citing Abu Ja'far al-Kittani.

<sup>26</sup> V. Turner, The Ritual Process, 1969, p.128. Turner derives the concept of liminality from van Gennep's The Rites of Passage (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960). The Latin word limen means "threshold", "door", or "entrance". Thus the concept implies access to, or mediation of some power lying beyond the normal range of human capacity. In this study the use of the concept differs from Turner's use. When applied to a marabout or Muslim holy man, the term implies a permanent rather than a temporary status.

Malams and marabouts, with their possession of baraka, illustrate the quality of liminality which is a necessary feature of communitas. The power of baraka enables the holy men to stand "betwixt and between" the positions assigned by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial. As such, their ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a rich variety of supernatural powers and symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transitions.<sup>27</sup>

Because the brotherhood leaders manifest a "betwixt and between" social character, they are at one and the same time able to mobilize numbers of clients and disciples into a cohesive group and to assert their political neutrality with regard to the central government. But the very fact that they are able to mobilize cohesively large sectors of the population by appealing to 'primordial sentiments' makes the brotherhoods a potential threat to the authority of the administration. Hence the activity of the Muridiyya in Senegal and the Reformed Tijaniyya in Nigeria was met with the hostility of the ruling elite in both countries.<sup>28</sup> Since the organization of the brotherhoods does not form part of the official structure of the state, it cannot directly be controlled by legal or economic sanctions. If the central government does react strongly against the brotherhoods, it may lead to a heightened sense of opposition and exclusiveness on the part of the members of the various religious groups. This situation is particularly acute when the formal political structure maintains a precarious hold on the loyalty of its citizens.

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<sup>27</sup> Turner, op. cit., 1969, p.95

<sup>28</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.42



The social role of the brotherhoods evolves as political and economic conditions evolve with the result that the external features defining the group may vary according to the particular structural conditions that affect it at any given time.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, in order to discover how informal groups manage to adapt to changing circumstances, it is necessary to examine their development over a period of time in order to avoid a typology based on a synchronic analysis of a single crisis situation. For this reason, it is inaccurate to describe the Muslim brotherhoods as anti-colonial movements since their membership and influence have increased in certain areas since independence. In fact, decolonization has brought about a host of new factors to which the brotherhoods have responded.

Despite the introduction of parliamentary forms of government, the majority of Hausa and Wolof peasants still focus their loyalty on local leaders.<sup>30</sup> There is little opportunity for the average citizen to participate in the administrative process due to his lack of educational background. In addition, the absence of strong political opposition parties, coupled with a dearth of secondary structures such as labour unions, clubs, and business organizations renders the situation more acute. The poverty of alternative organizational responses to the facts of modernization has enabled the brotherhoods to fill the vacuum in the formal political arena by creating a 'para-political structure.'<sup>31</sup>

The aim of this thesis will be to examine the role of the brotherhoods in articulating and safeguarding the political and economic interests

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<sup>29</sup> See R. Bastide, "Messianism and Social and Economic Development," in I. Wallerstein ed. Social Change: The Colonial Situation, 1966, p.472.

<sup>30</sup> For the Hausa, see M.G. Smith, 1955, p.33; For the Wolof, see David Ames, "Wolof Cooperative Work Groups" in W. Bascom and M. Herskovits (eds.), Continuity and Change in African Cultures, p.226.

<sup>31</sup> F.G. Bailey, "Parapolitical Systems" in M. Swartz (ed.), Local Level Politics (Chicago, Aldine Publishing Company, 1968).

of their members during three periods of rapid social change. The general structure of the brotherhoods will be analysed under the rubric of voluntary informal organizations. Initially, the purpose of these liminal organizations was the formation of what Turner calls communitas, that is, "a relationship between concrete, historical, idiosyncratic individuals."<sup>32</sup> In the course of time, this spontaneous movement became normative because of the need to mobilize and organize resources, and the necessity to exercise social control over the members of the group in the achievement of the goals of the group.<sup>33</sup> The development of concrete structure evolved from the implementation of these norms and goals as a response to the political and social changes introduced by the formal administrative power. The three time periods have been chosen as a heuristic device to facilitate the description of the activity of the brotherhoods under changing conditions.

First Period: 1886-1903. The Imposition of Colonial Rule

After the battle of Dekkile in 1886 all effective resistance to French rule in Senegal collapsed. The French proceeded to dismantle the traditional political system of the Wolof states depriving many mobile clans and the warrior class (Wolof: Tyeddo) of their rank and status. The peasants and slaves formerly tributary to the nobles and warriors, lacked any structural means to organize themselves as a group. At this critical juncture Ahmadu Bamba, of prominent Tokolor clerical origin, retreated to his clan settlement in the village of Mbacke beyond the

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<sup>32</sup>

Turner, op. cit., pp.96 and 127.

<sup>33</sup>

Turner, op. cit., 1969, p.132.

zone of direct French influence. There he was joined by remnants of the defeated nobles, warriors and peasants. This community became the nucleus of the Muridiyya brotherhood.

In 1903 the Caliph of Sokoto, Attahiru Ahmadu, was slain in the battle of Burmi bringing to an end the independent empire set up by Uthman Dan Fodio. But, unlike their French counterparts, the British did not attempt to alter the political system of the Fulani Empire. Instead they confirmed it in power through the device of indirect rule. Consequently, the class distinction between Fulani overlords and Habe peasants was maintained and reinforced by the British presence. Since the Fulani Muslim leaders controlled taxes, agricultural policy, legal appointments, and land tenure under nominal British supervision, the Habe (Pl. of kado, 'original inhabitant') peasants and traders were enclosed by an extremely rigid social system. Long distance trade might be an outlet for energetic members of the Talakawa or commoner class, but the wealth gained by these enterprising merchants did not affect their rank. No matter how wealthy he might be, the merchant was still a kado, hence he could not aspire to high office in the Fulani system. It was in this situation that the Tijaniyya order began to make inroads among the Hausa. M. Last has pointed out that the end of the 19th century was a period of popular dissent manifested through the activity of the Tijaniyya and Mahdist groups.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Murray Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent in Hausaland, 1800-1960", Africa, XL, 4 (1970), 345 - 357.

Second Period: 1920-1940 Economic Changes Wrought by the Colonial Powers

In Senegal traditional Wolof agriculture was tied to the extended family. Land was not individually owned; the family as a whole cultivated its fields. Portions of the fields were allocated by the local head of the family to its various members. Two factors changed this system: (1) the loss of authority of the family heads due to the destruction of the Wolof political system which affected all levels of society, and (2) the cultivation of groundnuts for profit and the export trade which meant that little or no time was given to the common family field. Instead the Wolof farmers devoted their efforts to their small individual plots.

In addition to these changes on the local level, the disappearance of the Wolof kingdoms left large areas without ownership title. As a result the religious leaders attempted to restore the fortunes of Wolof farmers by claiming these vacant lands for their followers. The marabouts began sending their disciples to clear and plant fields in areas convenient to market and shipping centres. Soon the whole structure of the Muridiyya brotherhood became defined by this new role and it was not long before the Tijaniyya in Senegal followed suit. This frenetic drive to clear and cultivate new lands coincided with French aims in increasing the production of groundnuts. By the early 1930's the government actively supported the brotherhoods thereby enhancing the power and prestige of the clerical leaders. As well as being a 'holy man', the marabout became a successful entrepreneur and exporter.

In Northern Nigeria the studies of P. Hill and M.G. Smith indicate that the communal aspect of agricultural production is waning.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> M.G. Smith, 1955, op. cit., pp.112-114; P. Hill, Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa, 1970, ch. 7, passim.

This seems to be a result of urban migration and the introduction of cash crops. As a result the Habe farmers, like their Wolof counterparts, have become involved in a wider economic network. But political development in Northern Nigeria did not match economic development. Administrative positions were largely filled by Fulani and their clients. On the other hand, the shortage of trained staff required the importation of clerks, civil servants, postal and railway personnel from the south to fill the new vacancies in the growing bureaucracy. This gave rise to feelings of resentment on the part of the Hausa who displayed their dissent by riots in Kano, Kaura Namoda and other trade centres where Hausa and Southern tribesmen confronted one another in competition for jobs.

In this situation of tension the Tijaniyya order served to express Hausa Muslim grievances and it appears that Tijaniyya Malams were prominent in fomenting public expressions of dissatisfaction with the status quo. Whereas in Senegal the brotherhoods influence was encouraged by the French, in Nigeria on the other hand, the influence of the Tijaniyya was viewed as a threat to the authority of the emirs and the whole system of Fulani dominance.

### Third Period: 1940-1965 The Rise of National Politics

In Senegal the Muslim clerics did not themselves become the leaders of formal political parties because of their religious status. However they did support those leaders who were most likely to protect or respect the interests of the brotherhoods. As a result the formal political structure remains independent of the marabouts despite the fact that some marabouts do hold local office. But the formal political structure of the Senegalese government needs the brotherhoods' support if it is to stay in power. Because of the tight control exercised by the clerics over their followers, the brotherhoods remain the focus of primordial loyalty.

In Nigeria the ruling elite of the Fulani, although they had originally justified their rule in religious terms, had developed into a caste-like closed group. As a result they gradually gave up ritual association with the masses and in a sense became 'secularized'. With the end of British rule the position of the emirs was threatened by growing dissatisfaction on the part of the Habe Talakawa. To meet this threat the Sardauna of Sokoto attempted to mobilize public opinion by appealing to religious symbols and cultural patterns. This attempt failed and one of the reasons for its failure was the fact that the Tijaniyya order had already won so many adherents in Nigeria, including Sokoto itself, thereby seriously undermining the claims of the Sokoto dynasty to represent the true traditions of Islam. By losing their "liminal" status, the Fulani rulers, no matter how pious they were in their private observance of Islam, could no longer publicly proclaim their religious status since they had become part and parcel of the formal political apparatus set up by the British.

By investigating the activity of the Tijaniyya and the Muridiyya brotherhoods during three critical phases, the adaptive role of the brotherhood organization will be clarified. When the patterns of authority and the allocation of power roles were altered or disrupted, the Wolof of Senegal and the Hausa of Nigeria were forced to discover new ways to adapt and modify custom in order to meet the new political situation. To meet this challenge, the brotherhoods with their elaborate system of symbols and rituals, formed a sub-systems which functioned as an informal or "para-political" organizations. The



Tijaniyya and Muridiyya created a network of zawiyas, daras (collective farms), and da'iras (urban federations) which enabled them to maintain their distinctiveness and unity in the urban and rural contexts. The sufi hierarchy, based on the possession of baraka, became an authoritative source of decisions aimed at extending the influence of the brotherhoods in various economic and political sectors.

## CHAPTER II

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE BROTHERHOODS

#### THE FUNCTION OF LIMINALITY IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

The tariqas were originally the outgrowths of the ascetical and mystical movement known as Sufism which spread throughout the Muslim world during the middle ages.<sup>1</sup> Orientalists and other scholars have generally interpreted the diffusion of sufi brotherhoods as a popular reaction to the dry legalism propounded by the Ulama', the scholar-theologians who were the guardians of the Sunna, the orthodox tradition derived from the life and teaching of the prophet Muhammad.<sup>2</sup> This explanation of the popular appeal of Sufism tends to overlook the historical and social circumstances which played a major role in shaping and directing the new style of expressing devotion and religious affiliation.

It is apparent that the period which witnessed the final disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate also witnessed a sudden rise in popular enthusiasm for the various brotherhoods which hitherto had been confined to rather esoteric groups given to gnostic and theosophic speculation. In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries the Islamic world experienced tremendous political upheavals culminating in the Mongol capture of Baghdad and the death of the last official Caliph in 1258. This catastrophe deprived the Sunni community of its religious leader who was the successor of the prophet Muhammad and the "Shadow of God on

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<sup>1</sup> See Trimingham, The Sufi Orders in Islam (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971) for a recent survey of Sufi orders.

<sup>2</sup> See G-C Anawati and Louis Gardet, Mystique Musulman (Paris, J. Vrin, 1961) for a discussion of the major doctrines of Sufism.

Earth". The severing of a direct link with the prophet represented by the politico-religious institution of the Caliphate raised a number of legal and religious questions which exercised the minds of Muslim theorists for several centuries. It is in this context that the isnad or silsila, a spiritual genealogy invented to link the chain of religious authorities within a particular brotherhood to the teaching of the prophet, has particular relevance. The formal institutional link with the prophet was replaced by a spiritual, informal link. At this early date, the tarigas became the major vehicles of preserving and extending Islam when the central political structure suffered eclipse.

Later Sufism became the object of severe strictures on the part of the 'ulama' and orthodox theologians. These critics viewed the bizarre rituals of the orders and their toleration of folk beliefs as a perversion of Islam. Indeed it is often asserted that sufism was a sign of the decline of learning in Islam.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the sociological study of Islam must accept with caution such concepts as "Pure Islam" or "Orthodox Islam". For Islam cannot be studied apart from its social context which differs from area to area. Richard Antoun has already pointed out the pitfall attached to the assumption that the "Pure Islam" of urban clerics is the touchstone determining whether particular societies or groups are Islamic or not.

It is precisely the view held by Abu-Zahra that has hindered meaningful social anthropological analysis in the Middle East. The Great Religious Tradition, in this instance Islam, is regarded as something pure, something isolated — the focus of scholars and jurists but not the proper subject of social

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Anawati and Gardet, op. cit., p.68; O'Brien, op. cit., p.27;  
A.J. Arberry, Sufism, London, 1950, p.115.

anthropologists studying peasant communities, for, as we all know, peasants are illiterate and unknowing of the subtleties of law and doctrine.<sup>4</sup>

Islam for the ordinary believer is not an abstract system of beliefs. It is a way of life expressing, through common ritual, the community of the faithful who are bound together by confessing belief in one God and His messenger, the prophet Muhammad. At the same time this ritual expression of belief differentiates the Muslim from the non-believer - those who do not pray.<sup>5</sup> Membership in a brotherhood is an additional factor in this differentiation even though adherence to one or another brotherhood involves little more than the adoption of a special prayer formula (Ar. wird) which is attributed to the founder and is associated with his mystical power (baraka). What is of moment is the fact that belief is made concrete by prayer and ritual; Islam is a faith which is seen and heard and not, for the ordinary believer in West Africa, a private system of beliefs with a minimum of public expression.

Quite often the individual tariqas are so loosely organized that there is no single hierarchical structure which exercises authority over all the members. Rather it seems that the initiates (Ar. pl. talaba, s. talib) gravitated around local saints and dignitaries who frequently became the founders of their own brotherhoods when their personal prestige and the number of their adherents warranted such a development.

In West Africa the tariqas are represented by three groups whose membership comprises the vast majority of those Muslims who claim affilia-

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<sup>4</sup>Richard T. Antoun, "Reply to Nadia Abu Zahra". American Anthropologist, vol. 72 (1970), 1088-1092.

<sup>5</sup>S.F. Nadel, Nupe Religion (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954) p.235. The definition of a Muslim is one who ji sala, i.e. says the prescribed prayers.

to a brotherhood. The three groups are the Tijaniyya, the Qadiriyya, and the Muridiyya. The Qadiriyya Brotherhood is the oldest and most widely dispersed of the three with centres scattered throughout the Muslim world. It takes its name from its founder Abd al-Qadir al Jilani who died in Baghdad in 1166. Although it was a major factor in the islamization of West Africa in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the various branches of the order maintain only tenuous relationships with one another.<sup>6</sup> All strains of the Qadiriyya in the western Sudan trace their origin back to the Kunta Arabs, a semi nomadic tribe whose territory was in the area of Timbuktu. Because of its prestige as a clerical tribe and its proximity to the major trans-Saharan trade routes, the Kunta tribe has exerted considerable influence upon the Sudanese traders who plied their wares in the markets of Timbuktu and other towns along the upper Niger.<sup>7</sup> To this day the leading shaikhs of the Qadiriyya are found in Mauretania and Northern Mali.

The Tijaniyya Brotherhood is of much more recent origin and its disciples are found mainly in the Maghreb and the Western Sudan. The founder of the Brotherhood, Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-Mukhtar al-Tijani was born in 1737 at Ain Madi near Laghouat in Algeria. However since his tomb is at Fez where he died in 1815, the Moroccan Zawiya (Ar. lodge, convent) has become the major Tijani centre and object of pilgrimage. According to Andre, the Zawiya at Fez had been hostile to French

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<sup>6</sup> Trimingham, 1962, op. cit. p.159; O'Brien, op. cit. p.26.

<sup>7</sup> M. Cardaire, Contribution a l'etude de l'Islam noir (Yaounde: I.F.A.N., 1949), p.60

influence, while the descendants of Ahmad al-Tijani still resident at Ain Madi were regarded as francophiles.<sup>8</sup> This partly explains the strained relations existing between the two Tijani centres.

A recent monograph on the Tijaniyya maintains that Tijani cooperation with the French in Algeria was due to the fact that the brotherhood was of very recent origin and could therefore adjust more easily to the colonial impact than the older established orders. Secondly, the Tijanis hoped to set up a Tijaniyya state with the aid of the French. However, this policy resulted in the enmity of the Amir Abd al-Qadir, leader of the resistance to the French and a member of the Qadiriyya. In 1827 the son and heir of Ahmad al-Tijani was killed by clients of Abd al-Qadir. This hostility between the two brotherhoods was exacerbated when Abd al-Qadir captured Ain Madi after a six month siege.<sup>9</sup> This opposition between the Qadiriyya and the Tijaniyya is a recurrent theme in the history of the relationship between the two orders.

The third brotherhood selected for analysis is the Muridiyya whose membership is confined almost exclusively to the Wolof of Senegal. The Muridiyya tariqa came into being at the end of the nineteenth century when a Senegalese marabout, Ahmadu Bamba began to attract disciples to his village of Mbacke where he taught them a new ritual formula. This initiation through the use of a new prayer ritual signified the new brotherhood's independence of the Qadiriyya to which Bamba had previously

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<sup>8</sup> Andre, op. cit., p.172.

<sup>9</sup> Abun-Nasr, op. cit., pp.64-65; P. Slimar, "A Note on the Socio-Economic and Cultural Role of Sufi Brotherhoods and Maraboutism in the Modern Maghreb", Proceedings of the First International Congress of Africanists, 1962, mimeo document 38, p.8.

been affiliated.<sup>10</sup>

The West African Brotherhoods are outgrowths of the Sufi movement which has a venerable history. Originally the sufi was an ascetic who lived a retired life in voluntary poverty meditating on the Qur'an. Massignon views this mystic calling as ". . . the result of an inner rebellion of the conscience against social injustices, not only those of others but primarily and particularly against one's own faults with an intense desire after inner purification to find God at any price."<sup>11</sup> Because of the sufi emphasis on the inner judgement of conscience, the professional canonists (Ulama') saw in the movement a derogation of the Shari'a, the canon law, which was concerned with the external fulfillment of the religious obligations of Islam.

These sufi ascetics gradually gathered around themselves permanent disciples who preserved and disseminated the teaching of their saintly guide and master. However the attachment to the founder was due not only to the appeal of his moral teaching, but also to his possession of baraka, a divine power residing in his person and transmitted to his spiritual descendents. Thus in a very real sense the authority of the saint rested on his disciples devotion to his person and to the normative patterns of activity revealed or ordained by him.<sup>12</sup>

Although Sufi orders spread throughout the Islamic world, it was in North Africa that they achieved their apogee of power and influence. However the lack of a coordinated authority structure has been responsible for a widespread fragmentation resulting in dozens of localized brother-

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<sup>10</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.42.

<sup>11</sup> Art. "Tasawwuf" by L. Massignon in Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, eds. (London: Luzac, 1961) p.580.

<sup>12</sup> E. Westermarck, Ritual and Belief in Morocco, vol. I (New Hyde Park, N.Y.: University Books, 1970, reprint of 1926 ed.) p.35.

hoods in the Maghreb. It seems likely that this localization is rooted in the historical division between the central government (al-Makhzan) of the plains, and the mountain tribes who remained outside government control in what was termed the "Land of Insolence" (Ar. bilad al-Siba') the literal meaning of 'siba' is "childish behaviour"). According to Gellner the saints of the brotherhoods in the Moroccan Atlas express the boundaries between tribal groups.<sup>13</sup> This "diacritical" role of the brotherhoods seems to be confined to North Africa since the two leading brotherhoods, the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya, appear to have retained a nominally united membership in the Western Sudan. The Tijaniyya however has given rise to a number of splinter groups but even these offshoots still maintain that they are members of the parent body.

A major factor contributing to a lack of sectarian segmentation in the West African Brotherhoods is the close connection between trade and the spread of Islam in West Africa. The network of trade routes used by Muslim merchants also served as a means of communication among the various local brotherhood centres. The fact that the brotherhoods were largely propagated by wandering clerics tended to set up religious bonds between otherwise disparate groups. I.M. Lewis has pointed out that this mercantile activity was favoured by the universal ethos of Islam, a common ritual, and the use of Arabic as the vehicle of communication and contract.<sup>14</sup>

The Muslim merchants together with their religious advisors soon

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<sup>13</sup> E. Gellner, Saints of the Atlas (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969) p.301.

<sup>14</sup> I.M. Lewis, "Introduction" in I.M. Lewis, ed., Islam in Tropical Africa, International African Institute, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966) p.20.



formed a quasi class called Dyula (Mande for "trader"). They were extremely mobile and when settled in villages, their agricultural needs were met by the work of their slaves purchased through trading activities. Although the Dyula fitted into the framework of the local society, they preserved their Islamic characteristics and remained apart from inter-village warfare and local religious rites that were incompatible with Muslim belief. Gradually a network of Muslim trading settlements became superimposed on various, often mutually hostile pagan settled agriculturalists. But because they were a minority, the Muslim merchants could not actively proselytize among the pagans. Nevertheless, their religious influence was felt in other, more traditional ways. Because of their book learning, rudimentary though it may have been, the Muslims were considered to have access to magical charms and formulas which were useful in treating diseases, divining, and protecting against witchcraft and sorcery.<sup>15</sup>

This power of invoking mystical aids in dealing with problems involving supra-human agencies became one of the defining characteristics of the Muslim trader-turned holy man. In this manner the Dyula trader became endowed with baraka which became a potent weapon in many circumstances fraught with fear and uncertainty. Hence many traders quite readily affiliated themselves to a tariqa in order to share in the supernatural gifts promised to its members. As a result, the Muslim merchants often were middle men in both the spiritual and material realms. Abun-Nasr describes how this function of mediator operated in the

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<sup>15</sup> Trimingham, 1962, op. cit., p.143.

### Saharan trade:

In an area where supernatural powers were presumed to play an important part in the life of human beings, it was natural for its inhabitants to appeal to those powers for the protection which the temporal authorities could not provide. The marabouts, who were considered capable of invoking these powers and of using them were also considered immune from the attack of outlaws in distant lands. Holy men thus travelled in desolate areas loaded with valuable goods without fear of robbers. This partly explains the association of commerce with religion in such areas as the Sahara.<sup>16</sup>

The period preceding the French and British occupation of the Western Sudan was marked by political fragmentation. Even the newly-established Fulani Empire of Sokoto suffered periodic raids from Hausa successor states along its northern borders. In this context the Muslim trader came to fill the role of "resident stranger" and, as such, served as a channel of communication between warring factions. Because of his "liminal status", to borrow Turner's terminology, the resident stranger is, in many respects, not bound by the codes and customs of the society in which he lives. In the case of the Muslim trade, his religious status, gave him certain privileges denied to his pagan hosts. Finally he became a true "middle man" by taking on necessary economic functions forbidden to or despised by members of the local society. Manning Nash makes the following remarks concerning the economic role of such middle men:

The role of money-lender, merchant, middleman, and labour-gang boss are roles ideally open to "resident strangers" who are not constrained by the social and cultural constitution of a given society (Chinese, Jews, Lebanese, Indians). They are lubricating factors in the economy and arrange the institutions for developing factor markets.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Abuh-Nasr, op. cit., p.7.

<sup>17</sup> Manning Nash, Primitive and Peasant Economic Systems, (San Francisco: Chandler Press, 1966), p.25.

In their mediating role as teachers, traders, and healers, Muslims soon began to exercise influence as advisers to local rulers who remained pagans but assumed some of the external trappings of a Muslim ruler. Levtzion maintains that these chiefs rarely became good Muslims because of the ritual obligations of chieftancy.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, when a chief did become a Muslim and openly proclaimed the fact, his authority then became subject to Muslim laws governing the conduct of rulers. In addition his territory technically became dar-al-Islam supposedly making it immune from attack by other Muslim rulers.<sup>19</sup>

As a Muslim the chief was faced with the task of adapting his ritual role to his new status. To prove the sincerity of his faith, the chief had to give up those rites and practices which conflicted with the Muslim way of life. In this "reformation" of the court religion, the Muslim holy men and advisers played a vital role. Nadel has pointed out that in Nupe, the rituals of general popular appeal which recurred at set intervals were abandoned while those rituals concerned with local, temporally undetermined crises were retained. Thus the solemn generalized rites concerned with well-being and prosperity could be easily subsumed under the Muslim Salla. The specific rituals concerned with ordeals, smallpox, and expulsion of evil influences remained operative.<sup>20</sup> It was precisely in these specific rituals that the Muslim holy man came to play a dominant role. Thus the traditional ritual functions of

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<sup>18</sup> Nehemia Levtzion, Muslims and Chiefs in West Africa, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p.191.

<sup>19</sup> For the Fulani understanding of this principle see Muhammad Bello, Infaku'l Maisuri, ed. C.J. Whitting (London, 1951) p.184; also Ivor Wilks, The Northern Factor in Ashanti History (Institute of African Studies, University College of Ghana, 1961), p.14.

<sup>20</sup> Nadel, 1954, op. cit., p.98.

the chief were considerably reduced while the ritual functions and authority of the holy men was enhanced.

In Senegal, the Muslim holy men developed into an autonomous social category whose influence became a counterpoise to the authority of the Chieftains.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, in Northern Nigeria, Muslim clerics belonging to the Torobe caste assisted in the administration of the Hausa states whose rulers in many instances practiced a syncretistic form of Islam.<sup>22</sup> Under such conditions, the relationship between syncretist rulers and devout clerics could only be tense and unstable. Often the Muslims would move some distance apart from their pagan hosts or relatives in order to practice a purer form of their religion. Peter Hammond has described this process on the village level where Islam has affected lineage solidarity among the Mossi.

A recent addition to the traditional pattern of village organization described above is the independent households of socially ambitious individuals who have chosen to separate themselves from the residences of their lineages in order to profit from their own economic or religious enterprises. Many have become independently wealthy through successful commercial ventures; others, as a result of conversion to Islam have gained prestige through religious authority and wealth through the tuition and services provided by the Koranic students. Often these people are much younger than their lineage elders, not in line for the inheritance of political or religious authority through traditional channels, and unwilling either to accept the authority of their seniors or to share economically with the less prosperous members of their lineages.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Michael Crowder, The Story of Nigeria, (London: Faber & Faber, 1966) p.92.

<sup>22</sup> Pelissier, Paul, Les Paysans du Senegal (Saint-Yrieux, Imprimerie Fabregue, 1966), pp.113 - 114.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Hammond, "Economic Change and Mossi Acculturation" in W. Bascom and M. Herakovits eds. Continuity and Change in African Cultures (Chicago: University Press, 1962), p.243.

Often these clan and family groups became the defenders of the peasantry in the face of unjustified exactions demanded by the chiefs as tribute. Thus in Senegal there were several uprisings of the peasants led by a coalition of marabouts against the Damel (king) of Kayor.<sup>24</sup> Violent manifestations of discontent soon became a regular feature of West African history immediately preceding the colonial era. During this sequence of events there are indications that the Muslim communities within traditional societies were undergoing a fundamental change in their religious outlook sparked by the increasing activity of clerics belonging to one or another brotherhood.

By the end of the eighteenth century Islam had developed a new clerical aristocracy as a counterpoise to the old traditional aristocracy of chiefs and clan leaders. This new aristocracy was based on Quranic learning and purity of religious observance which called for religious endogamy in order to avoid "mixing" with pagans or syncretist Muslims. Due to their association with long-distance trade these zealous Muslims built a network of religious experts scattered throughout the Western Sudan who kept in contact with one another through the activity of wandering clerics belonging to the Qadiriyya order.<sup>25</sup> Membership in an order provided a common identifying label and a ritual link which cut across tribal and local loyalties. A cleric or trader would find a ready welcome in a zawiya (rest house, or local religious establishment) belonging to the brotherhood when his merchant or teaching activity took him away from home.

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<sup>24</sup> See Pelissier, ibid., p.114.

<sup>25</sup> Trimingham, 1962, p.160 - 162.

The leaders of this religious revitalization movement were, for the most part, members of a clerical caste called Torobe (Fulani: "Those who pray to God").<sup>26</sup> Under the leadership of torobe clerics jihad movements were launched against pagan and semi-pagan rulers in Futa Jallon and Futa Toro in 1725 and 1776 respectively. Another jihad resulted in the fall of the Bambara kingdom of Massina whose capitulation brought the entrepot cities of Jenne and Timbuktu under clerical rule. The most famous Fulani jihad launched by torobe clerics was that of Shaikh Uthman Dan Fodio which resulted in the establishment of a Fulani State in most of the territory formerly ruled by the Hausa city-states. The last widespread jihad engineered by a Muslim cleric of Fulani origin was the movement led by the Tokolor leader Umar Saidu Tall, known as al-Hajj Umar.<sup>27</sup>

The rise and fall of Fulani states, formed under the aegis of torobe clerics, cannot be ascribed to incipient nationalism since in most of the cases mentioned above the reforming Muslims fought against other Fulani. In addition their followers were enlisted from a number of different ethnic groups.

On the other hand, the activity of the clerics in the cycle of jihads points to the formation of a liminal group of religious zealots

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<sup>26</sup> D.J. Stenning, Savannah Nomads, (London: International African Institute, Oxford University Press, 1959), p.22; Another name for these clerics was Moodibbo pl. Moodibbe which means a wandering beggar (Ar. Faqir). Today Moodibbo is equivalent to Hausa malam and in Wolof it is rendered as serin.

<sup>27</sup> Trimingham, 1962, op. cit. pp.160-162. The distinction between Tokolor and Fulani is rather difficult to define. It seems that the Tokolor are originally those inhabitants of Tekrur who speak the Fulani language and practiced Islam. Uthman dan Fodio is sometimes called Turudi which is the Arabic transcription of Toroddo the singular of Torobe (Tazyin al Waraqat by Abdullah b. Muhammad, ed. M. Hiskett, Ibadan, 1963, pp.5 and 25) indicating his origin in Futa Toro which is the modern equivalent of the ancient Tekrur, in Senegal.

which appealed to the Shari'a and the Qur'an to vindicate its claims to leadership. This confrontation between the marginal clerical caste and hereditary pagan or semi-pagan rulers developed along the following lines:

(1) The symbiotic phase: Muslim traders settle among pagan groups. This period is marked by an absence of proselytism due to numerical weakness. The Muslims take wives from their pagan neighbors.

(2) Administrative phase: In the larger towns and capitals, literate Muslims are co-opted into the administrative bureaucracy of the local polity. This literate class forms a cohesive body since literacy in Arabic was generally achieved at the hands of clerics belonging to a brotherhood who initiated their pupils into the order in the course of their teaching.

(3) Ritual Phase: As court ceremonial takes on an Islamic appearance, Muslim clerics begin to enter the ceremonial and ritual life of the community at large. The cleric dispenses Qur'anic amulets as a protection against sorcery. He may also divine the course of future events or the cause of illness. If his knowledge is sufficient, he may teach the Qur'an outside court circles and officiate at name-giving ceremonies, weddings and funerals thus displacing the traditional pagan functionaries. This phase marks the Islamization of the "universal" rites of the community and the assumption, on the part of the cleric, of the "specific" ritual roles mentioned by Nadel.<sup>28</sup>

(4) Phase of cleavage and hostility: The tension between the clerical class and the hereditary ruling class is manifested by public

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<sup>28</sup> Nadel, 1954, p.235; cf. p.22.

denunciation. This phase is marked by hijra, when the clerics and their followers move apart from the community and form their own separate community of believers. The hijra is a symbolic imitation of the example of Muhammad who "migrated" to Medina because of the hostility of the Meccan ruling class. This action of emigration marks a definite break with the pagan or semi-Muslim rulers.<sup>29</sup>

(5) Jihad: The clerics declare the ruler unfit to rule and appeal to Islamic norms to vindicate their assertions. The cleric mobilizes his followers to overthrow the regime. Upon successful completion of the jihad, the clerical leaders and their allies assume the role vacated by the defeated ruling class.

This process of the formation of theocratic states by clerical groups belonging to one or another brotherhood seems to be characteristic of Islam in the Western Sudan. The recurring cycle of Jihads directed first against pagan rulers and later against Muslim rulers who accommodated themselves to local custom, illustrates the precariousness of strict theocratic rule in an area where syncretism was customary.

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<sup>29</sup> For the hijra of Dan Fodio see Trimingham, 1962, p.198; for the Khalwa and hijra of Hajj Umar see Trimingham, p.181 and also J.R. Willis, Al Hajj Umar, (Thesis Ph.D. University of London) p.136.

<sup>30</sup> The hijra (Ar. emigration) is rooted in Islamic tradition and symbolizes the separation of the Muslims from unbelievers. An allied concept is that of khalwa (Ar. seclusion, retreat) in which the reformer or holy man spends a period in solitude and prayer in order to receive divine confirmation of his role as leader of a jihad or similar reform movement. Khalwa is a feature of the jihad movements begun by the Tijani reformers Hajj Umar, Ma Ba Jiakhu, and Muhammad al-Amin, the Soninke. See H.J. Fisher, "The Early Life and Pilgrimage of al-Hajj Muhammad al-Amin the Soninke", Journal of African History, xi, 1, (1970), pp.51-69. Hijra and khalwa are liminal phases in the process of becoming a religious leader. "If liminality is regarded as a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action, it can be seen as potentially a period of scrutinization of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs." Turner: 1969, p.167.



The Fulani proverb: "The cleric begets a chief and the chief begets an unbeliever", aptly illustrates the predicament of the Muslim reformers once they have installed themselves as a formal governing body whose legitimacy rests on theocratic principles.

To preserve their hegemony over their subjects, the new Muslim rulers evolved social barriers and myths which emphasized their own exclusive nature. Thus among the Fulani rulers of the Hausa states, a complex ceremonial etiquette delineates rulers and ruled.<sup>30</sup> In Adamawa this differentiation reached its most extreme expression. Lacroix mentions that the Fulani chiefs have become almost divine beings, reputed to possess a whole range of supernatural powers. As a result Islam has become identified with the Fulani political and social system. Not surprisingly the power of the brotherhoods has been almost non-existent in this eastern province of Nigeria, since the Fulani rulers would not tolerate any potential criticism of their style of rule. However, dissent has manifested itself in outbreaks of Mandism which at times has been a threat to the oppressive Fulani regime.<sup>31</sup>

Despite periodic outbreaks of dissent, the Fulani system in Northern Nigeria managed to consolidate itself until the advent of the British. The introduction of indirect rule, far from causing a breakdown in the structure, actually confirmed the power of the ruling Fulani elite.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> M.G. Smith, 1954, op. cit., p.93.

<sup>31</sup> P.F. Lacroix, "L'Islam Peul de l'Adamawa" in I.M. Lewis ed. Islam in Tropical Africa, p.406.

<sup>32</sup> Lacroix, p.403.

In Senegal, on the other hand, the process of formation of Muslim theocracies was still-born. The jihad movements inaugurated by the Tijani clerics Al-Hajj Umar, Ma Ba, and Muhammad al-Amin coincided with the French military penetration of the interior. A second factor preventing the survival of the jihadist states was the bitter rivalry between the Tijani leaders who were mostly Tokolor, and the Qadiri clerics led by Ahmad al-Bakka'i, the Shaikh of the Kunta Arabs. The latter was the most prestigious Qadiri leader in the Western Sudan and bitterly attacked al-Hajj Umar for his aggressive policies against certain Muslim leaders. Matters came to a climax when Ahmad al-Bakka'i gathered support from the Qadiri Fulani of Massina and besieged al-Hajj Umar in his headquarters at Hamdallahi in 1864. Although Umar managed to escape, he was subsequently killed in the course of his flight from Hamdallahi.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, it was mainly through the policies of Hajj Umar that the Tijaniyya became the dominant brotherhood in West Africa. But by 1893 the last Tijani state, Segu, fell to the French and its ruler, Ahmadu, the son of Hajj Umar, fled to Sokoto.

The transformation of the liminal holy man into a warrior is symptomatic of the social changes which swept across West African Muslim populations in the period which saw the increasing presence of the European powers in the area.

The opening up of commercial relations with Europeans on a large scale meant that the Muslim clerics had to look for new resources in order to safeguard their traditional role as mediators and guardians of the true faith which was now threatened by the European infidel. Simply

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<sup>33</sup> Trimingham, 1962, op. cit., p.184, 186.

preaching and teaching Qur'anic lore was not enough to blunt the impact of European domination as was amply illustrated by the French subjection of North Africa. In this situation the clerics exchanged their educational and ritual roles for a military role, thereby supplanting local tribal and ethnic warlords.<sup>34</sup> Even though the militant policy of Hajj Umar contained aspects of Tokolor ethnic aggression against the Bambara, the establishment of Muslim theocracies cannot be explained on ethnic grounds alone. On the contrary, the religious revolution represented by the jihads was an attempt to set up an inter-ethnic political unit based on a common religious link. In the case of Hajj Umar that link was the Tijaniyya order. Last has pointed out that the semi-nomadic teaching clerics who travelled widely throughout the Sudan avoided being identified with the administrative policy of this or that state.<sup>35</sup>

This freedom from being identified with any one particular ethnic or political group enabled the clerics to exercise their religious influence in bringing about a more universal Islamic sentiment. Originally, Uthman Dan Fodio, Hajj Umar, and Muhammad al-Amin were religious teachers moving from court to court and seeing with their own eyes how the "official" religion practiced by the elite had yielded to expedience in the day-to-day administration of a peasant population largely ignorant of the finer prescriptions of the Shari'a. But once the crusading clerics installed themselves as heads of state, they, or their descendants, gradually assumed the policies of their predecessors. Thus the Fulani in Nigeria curtailed their attendance at public prayers and

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<sup>34</sup> T. Hodgkin, "Islam and National Movements in West Africa", Journal of African History, 3, (1962), pp.323 - 327.

<sup>35</sup> M. Last, The Sokoto Caliphate, (London: Longmans, 1967) p LXXX.

rituals since such public occasions were often used to express dissatisfaction with the religious policy of the government. While still maintaining the outward appearance of theocracy, the ruling class more or less gave up their original role as expounders of the Qur'an and the Shari'a. In this way the rulers progressively insulated themselves from their subjects.<sup>36</sup> The onetime leaders of an informal religious movement had transformed themselves into the ruling elite within a formal political system. The wandering holy man surrounded himself with the panoply of the deposed Hausa Emirs.

When the British policy of Indirect Rule was used to buttress the rule of the Fulani Emirs in Nigeria, it rendered any expression of dissent, even though couched in a religious idiom, a threat both to the Emirs and the colonial government. The French in Senegal, on the other hand, established a system of direct rule which largely eliminated the native political apparatus. As a result, the Muslim leaders in Senegal became the focus of new loyalties which were articulated in a religious idiom. So long as this religious loyalty did not conflict with the aims of the colonial regime it was allowed to exist as an informal interest group. Hence the power and influence of the Brotherhoods in Senegal is directly related to the fact that the French have removed any traditional political structure, whether religious or secular, which might interfere with the Brotherhoods' capturing popular loyalty.

In Nigeria, however, the dual nature of indirect rule rendered the situation ambiguous so that Muslim expressions of dissent aimed at the British would also jeopardise the privileged position of the Fulani Emirs.

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<sup>36</sup> M.G. Smith, 1954, op. cit., p.92; M. Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent in Northern Nigeria", 1970, op. cit., p.354.

Since the Emirs represented, at least theoretically, the pure traditions of the Shari'a, an expression of disobedience or dissatisfaction would have been a betrayal of Islam. Hence the Muslim Brotherhoods in Nigeria never attained the prestige and influence which they enjoyed in Senegal so long as the Emirate system continued intact. M.G. Smith sums up the Fulani position:

For, as the descendants or disciples of Shehu dan Fodio, Fulani Emirs regard themselves as the champions of Islam against both external pressure and internal defection, and as the process of assimilation proceeds, not only is more and more weight attached to the myth which sanctions the present regime in the eyes of the rulers, but those old pre-Fulani rituals which survived as accretions of the main Mahommedan (sic) ceremonies, and so served to bridge the gap between rulers and ruled, gradually lose their significance, are regarded as wasa (play), and are often forbidden in the name of Islam. On the other hand, Hausa regard obedience to their superiors and loyalty to their chief as one of the doctrines of Islam . . . . 37

In this religiously sanctioned formal political system with its cult of obedience, the scope of the reform-minded holy man or Malam is severely reduced. For any overt activity designed to purify Islam is bound to focus eventually on the policy and life style of the Emirs. Hence the ruling elite did their best to absorb Hausa and Fulani Malams into the administration and thereby convert the cleric into a bureaucrat.<sup>38</sup>

In an administrative structure with a theocratic ideology, disobedience meant not merely political dissent, but, what was far more serious, religious apostasy.<sup>39</sup> This dilemma was the major factor inhibiting the development of an informal religious organization which might act as a

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<sup>37</sup> M.G. Smith, 1954, p.93.

<sup>38</sup> Last, "Aspects of Administration", 1970, p.348.

<sup>39</sup> Crowder, op. cit., p.213.

counterweight to the formal political system of the Sokoto Caliphate. Many Muslims did belong to the Tijaniyya brotherhood which was regarded with some suspicion by the Fulani rulers, most of whom belonged to the Qadiriyya, but their activity was unobtrusive for the most part.

In the French territories, on the other hand, the structural conditions were such that the elimination of native rulers, Muslim and pagan, resulted in a political vacuum. The defeats suffered by al-Hajj Umar and Lat Dior, the Damel (king) of Kayor, were viewed by the Senegalese Wolof as the inevitable results of religious neglect. In this context, the clerical leaders of the brotherhoods emerged to reconstruct Muslim society which had been shaken by the political upheavals in the wake of French conquest. The religious heirs of the warrior clerics of the mid-nineteenth century became the focus of an active faith and ethical reform under the unifying aegis of the Muslim tariqas. The charismatic authority of the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya leaders brought about the formation of informal groupings which stood outside the formal "secular" French colonial regime. As "liminal" organizations they could claim immunity from direct political control since their aims were ostensibly religious. At the same time they afforded the Wolof peasants the means of integrating themselves as an ethnic group. For this reason Marty considered the adherence of the Wolof to the brotherhoods as a type of passive resistance to French domination.<sup>40</sup> In this sense they manifest a "revolutionary" character which aroused government opposition.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> P. Marty, Etudes sur l'islam au Senegal, I. (Paris, 1917), p.251.

<sup>41</sup> Cardaire, op. cit., 1949, pp. 75 - 76.

But the process whereby certain religious leaders such as the Murid leader Ahmadu Bamba, or the Tijani leader Malik Sy, became the focal points of immensely powerful informal groups illustrates the function of liminality in the total political context.<sup>42</sup> As liminal entities, the clerics (marabouts; Wolof: Serīn) are esteemed for "the blend they offer of lowliness and sacredness, of homogeneity and comradeship."<sup>43</sup> For the community of adherents is not organized, at least ideally, in terms of caste, class, rank hierarchies, or segmentary oppositions. In the ritual hadra (prayer seance) the brotherhood member enters a face to face relationship with a community blessed by the spiritual presence of the prophet and saints of the order.<sup>44</sup> Thus the brotherhoods serve as a means of communion with the prophet or, in the case of the Muridiyya, with Ahmadu Bamba. This possibility of communion is open to even the lowest disciple (Ar. Talib). In this sense the ritual of the brotherhoods manifests many of the characteristics of a revitalization movement.<sup>45</sup>

The mediating or liminal role of the marabouts builds up a new revitalized community which seeks to preserve its identity through a network of relationships between experts and disciples. In the Senegalese situation economic factors lent additional support to the prestige of the brotherhoods. The mystical power of baraka was

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<sup>42</sup> Liminality is used here in a slightly different sense from Turner's use. For Turner liminality is transitional, while the usage in this thesis gives liminality a status aspect which perdures through time.

<sup>43</sup> See Abun-Nasr, op. cit., 1965, pp.50 ff. for a description of Tijaniyya ritual.

<sup>44</sup> L.C. Behrman, 1970, op. cit., p.24.

rendered concrete in the involvement of the brotherhoods in the production and exportation of groundnuts.

However, once the religious role of the marabouts has economic ramifications, it is inevitable that the marabouts themselves will become implicated in the policies of the central government thereby surrendering to some extent their liminal status. By avoiding political office, the marabouts have preserved their informal status, while at the same time exercising indirect influence on the economic policies of the central government. Such a compromise is consonant with the political realities of present-day Senegal.

In a political system which embraces a population whose allegiance is regulated mostly by kinship ties, local loyalties, and religious affiliation, the power base of the central government is limited. Theoretically the Senegalese Constitution is secular and democratic which renders the central government neutral as far as ethnic and religious loyalties are concerned. Hence, in order to mobilize active public support, officials have to rely on the indirect aid of the brotherhood leaders. This explains the symbiotic relationship of the Brotherhoods and the central government which has persisted even after the granting of independence.<sup>46</sup>

Northern Nigeria makes an interesting contrast with the Senegalese situation. Unlike French policy in Senegal, the British policy of Indirect Rule strengthened the political system originally created by the jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio. The withdrawal of the British at the advent of independence meant that Northern Nigeria would face the

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<sup>46</sup> Behrman, 1970, p.138.



prospect of a new democratic, federal constitution which threatened to undermine the privileged theocratic position of the Fulani Emirs. The mass of the Hausa peasants would be exposed more systematically to a new political system which, outwardly at least, had the appearance of a parliamentary democracy. In such a situation the Emirs who ruled as hereditary heirs of religious reformers, could no longer maintain their monopoly of political and religious loyalty since under the new system the way was open for those outside the Fulani ruling class to compete for power. Expressions of dissent could be voiced in an Islamic idiom without branding their proponents as traitors of the faith. The intense activity of the Tijaniyya order in the period preceding independence can be interpreted as a popular manifestation of religious equality opposed to the rigidly stratified Fulani system of rank and class symbolized by the religious pretensions of the Sokoto Caliph. At the same time the brotherhoods were a means of expressing Islamic exclusiveness in the face of southern Nigerian attempts to gain political and economic influence in the Northern Region. Thus at one and the same time, a religious movement may be used either to reinforce differences (Hausa vs. Fulani; Northerners vs. Southerners) or to emphasize similarities (mobilization of peasants and ethnic groups).<sup>47</sup>

In both Senegal and Nigeria the brotherhoods served to integrate local groups into a more universalistic organization in the wake of the upheavals caused by the imposition of colonial rule and its subsequent withdrawal. In both areas the struggle for power could

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<sup>47</sup> J. Paden, "The Influence of Religious Elites on Political Culture and Community Integration in Kano Nigeria" (Ph.D. thesis; Harvard, 1968) p.417.

not be expressed formally since the constitutions of Nigeria and Senegal were secular. Hence the Muslims turned to the informal idiom of the brotherhood.

A recent thesis has examined this informal mechanism as it operated within the Emirate of Kano. The author describes the process whereby political leadership in the public forum is profoundly affected by the substratum of informal religious interest groups:

The establishment of trans-ethnic loyalties on the part of reformed brotherhoods has created a precedent which is in direct conflict with the nature of communal groupings. The principles necessary to justify such a reorientation of loyalties has required a shift from legalistic definitions of community, to sufistic definitions of community. In particular, this has entailed a shift of loyalty from "traditional" authority to charismatic authority.<sup>48</sup>

This shift to charismatic authority was facilitated by the liminal nature of the role of Tijani Malams in Nigeria. The same process had occurred in Senegal where the liminal-non political stance of Ahmadu Bamba and Malik Sy enabled the two leaders in question to become the gravitational points of powerful religious organizations. The time lag in Nigeria is explained by the fact that the theocratic Fulani system did not allow brotherhoods to publicly engage in criticism of the Islamic observance or non-observance of the Emirs. When the Emirs' power was weakened, then the activity of the Tijaniyya began to manifest open hostility to the Fulani system symbolized by the Sokoto Caliphate.

The brotherhoods carry within their structure a host of symbolic

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<sup>48</sup> Paden, op. cit., 1968, p.424.

activities such as shrine visiting, chant sessions, particular ascetic practices, and prayer formulas. Particular symbols and the activities and sentiments they generate become publicly operative under certain social conditions. These conditions are generally crisis situations in which the brotherhoods seek to preserve or defend Islamic values and ideals. As long as these values and the leaders who exemplify them have a liminal quality, a "betwixt and between" character, they remain potent agents of mobilization. When, however, the religious group develops into the nucleus of a formal political system, this liminal character becomes obscure or lost entirely. As the group assumes the reins of direct political power, its role becomes more rigidly defined. When religious leaders become heads of state, they must willy-nilly rely on the coercive power of law and administration and so negate the pristine virtues they once exemplified. Qualities associated with charismatic leadership such as ascetic withdrawal, simplicity, comradeship, poverty, and humility are rarely consonant with the pragmatic demands of power politics. To retain their position, the new political elite must resort to religiously dubious policies and methods of administrative, otherwise they face the growing possibility of revolt in the name of the very values they once embodied. This was the fate of the Samusiyya rulers in Libya who were overthrown by puritannical army officers who resented the autocratic privileges of the Grand Samusi and his family.

The following chapter will analyse the first stage in the process whereby the informal brotherhood organization in Senegal filled the

vacuum created by the elimination of the traditional political leaders during the imposition of French rule in the period 1886 - 1903.

### CHAPTER III

#### MARABOUTS AND CHIEFS. THE TRANSFORMATION OF AUTHORITY IN SENEGAL, 1886-1905.

The tension between the obligations of religious piety and the realities of political power is a recurrent theme in the history of Islamic states. The following anecdote aptly illustrates the dilemma faced by pious Muslims: "One of the saints saw in a dream a king in Paradise and a holy man in Hell. He asked, 'What is the cause of this man's degradation and that man's exaltation? For men believed the contrary of this.' A voice came, 'The king is come to Paradise because he had a love for Dervishes, the holy man to Hell because he sought the favor of kings.'"<sup>1</sup>

In nineteenth century Senegal the relationship between pagan or semi-Muslim chiefs and their Muslim subjects was particularly difficult. However the common threat represented by the growing power of the French in the area brought about an alliance, the remnants of the pagan aristocracy with their erstwhile enemies, the marabouts of the Muslim brotherhoods. This period of cooperation between rulers and holy men had a profound and lasting effect on the future development of Senegalese society. For once the French had effectively defeated the army of Lat Dior, the Damel of Kayor, they set about replacing the traditional leaders with petty chiefs who were entirely subordinate to the colonial administration. In addition the political re-organization of the defeated kingdoms into small territorial units aimed at preventing a resurgence of co-ordinated military resistance. In this situation the Muslim marabouts, who had allied themselves with the popular leaders such

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<sup>1</sup> A.J. Arberry, Kings and Beggars: The First Two Chapters of Sadi's Gulistan (London, 1945), pp.81-82.

as Lat Dior, found themselves as the representatives of the Wolof people in their fight against the French. The marabout had succeeded to the position vacated by the old Wolof aristocracy. This new function of the Muslim leaders had important social and economic consequences for the future development of Senegal.

The three major ethnic groups of Senegal are the Wolof, the Serer, and the Tokolor-Fulani. All three speak related languages and trace their origins back to northern Senegal and southern Mauretania. Various dates have been proposed for the separation of the Wolof from the Serer, but the exact relationship of the Wolof to the Tokolor is still uncertain.<sup>2</sup> Despite the paucity of historical evidence, it seems probable that the Wolof became a distinct ethnic group when the state of Jolof was founded in northeast Senegal. In 1566 this state divided into a number of smaller states which retained in varying degrees the administrative structure of the parent state. The manner of succession to the office of ruler was not the same for all the kingdoms: Jolof had a strictly patrilineal system, Walo, Kayor, and Baol had mixed systems, while Sine and Saloum were matrilineal. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the state of Kayor began to exercise some form of jurisdiction over Baol to the southeast.<sup>3</sup>

The social structure of these states was substantially a pyramidal organization of ranks and classes. At the base of the structure were the slaves (jam) and the occupational castes (nyenyo). The rest of the population were called jambour or geer, i.e., free men. This category

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<sup>2</sup> Monteil, Esquisses Senegalaises, p.17; Yaya Wane, Les Toucouleurs du Fouta Toro, pp.35-36.

<sup>3</sup> Behrman, p.22; O'Brien, p.16.

was subdivided into peasants (badolo) and nobles (gormi). At the summit was the ruler whose title differed from state to state: that of Kayor was called Danel; that of Walo, Barak; that of Baol, Teen; the rulers of Sine, Saloum, and Jolof all had the title of Bur.

An important distinction was made between ordinary slaves and crown slaves. The latter, called tyeddo, were the property of the ruler and the more powerful nobles and were used as instruments to exact tribute from the politically impotent peasants. The tyeddo also served as armed soldiers in the wars which were a constant feature of Senegalese society. Hence the tyeddo formed a type of janissary corps at the disposal of the ruling nobility. The constant depredations which the peasants suffered at the hands of the tyeddo forced many Wolof to migrate southward in order to secure land which would be safe from incursion. As a result of this pressure and consequent migration the Wolof did not become attached to their land nor did they try to improve it through the use of fertiliser or crop rotation. The Serer, on the other hand, were the first to migrate from the north and settled in the vicinity of Dakar and in the provinces of Sine and Saloum where they created stable agricultural communities which were able to resist foreign intruders. As a result the Serer began to practice more efficient means of production using fertiliser and crop rotation. Hence as one moves from north to south in Senegal communities become more stable and agriculture becomes more efficient. Similarly ethnic factors become more accentuated since the Serer who were the first to migrate from the north are also the most resistant to Islam which was introduced by

Tokolor or Wolof marabouts. It was the Serer who defeated and killed the Tijani marabout Ma Ba Jakhu in 1867 when the latter attempted to set up a Tijani state in south-central Senegal.<sup>4</sup>

This process of migratory drift from north to south has been the major factor in ethnic differentiation of Tokolor, Wolof and Serer. Because of their geographically central position the Wolof managed to achieve a position of dominance in Senegal by the middle of the nineteenth century. As a result, the Wolof began to expand at the expense of the other ethnic groups and began to acquire more and more land. Here again the Wolof system of land tenure and exploitation has continued to influence the pattern of settlement in present day Senegal.

Among the Wolof, the occupation and use of land was technically under the control of the monarch, who in turn delegated his powers to local chiefs called lamans. The lamans allotted large areas of land to their clients by granting them the right to clear specified forested tracts. This right of clearance was known as the "right of fire" (borom daye). These tracts were then parcelled out to the peasants who planted the land. This right was called the "right of axe" (borom n'gadio) and gave the peasant hereditary possession of the area which he cultivated.<sup>5</sup>

During the nineteenth century the monarchs of the Wolof states gave large tracts of virgin land to the marabouts under the title of the "right of fire". The marabouts in turn distributed their lands

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<sup>4</sup> See M. Klein, Islam and Imperialism in Senegal (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1968).

<sup>5</sup> Pelissier, p.126.



to the peasants who had become Muslim and gave them the "right of axe". Thus, the marabouts could reward their followers by giving them grants of land, a factor which greatly increased their social standing and, in effect, made them equivalent to the nobles in rank. Nevertheless, the relationship between nobles and marabouts became strained when the incessant conflicts between the different Wolof states forced the rulers to begin confiscating large tracts of land belonging to the lamans in order to raise supplies for their armies in the field. In order to satisfy the demands of the Damel or the Bur, the lamans began themselves to increase the amount of tribute levied on the peasants. The agents used in collecting the tribute were the tyeddo who frequently helped themselves to the supplies destined for the Damel or the local ruler.

The great mass of the Wolof peasants who actually cultivated the land found themselves more and more pressed by the exactions of their landlords who used the tyeddo to pillage and terrorize the peasant population whenever the latter proved refractory. In this situation the reformist marabouts who belonged mainly to the Tijaniyya order began to find a ready audience for their religious message. Even those Muslims who had been given the title of laman began to feel restive when the Damel of Kayor began to confiscate their estates. Gradually a wedge was driven into Wolof society cutting off the Damel and his immediate entourage of nobles with their tyeddo from the great mass of peasants who more and more began to gravitate to the marabouts for leadership and protection.<sup>6</sup> In this way the social and economic

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<sup>6</sup> Tidiane Sy, op. cit., pp.80-81.

cleavage between peasant badolo and nobles (gormi) became reinforced by religious affiliation. The peasants became Muslim while the nobles remained attached to the traditional cult. Indeed some authors have viewed the political structure of Senegal in this period as a prime example of class warfare. Robert Arnaud wrote in 1912 that conversion to Islam constituted a genuine social revolution for the Wolof and mobilized the proletarian class against the aristocracy. By converting en masse to Islam the peasants formed a bloc against the aristocracy which remained fetishistic. Before long the peasants began to resist the incursions of the tyeddo which soon found themselves in open conflict with the marabouts.<sup>7</sup>

The leaders of this wave of resistance were the torobe clerics whose activities have been discussed in the preceding chapter. Not only did the torobe encourage resistance in the village settlements but they also led bands of Muslims southwards to escape the tyeddo troops. Thus, the southward expansion of the Wolof became closely entwined with the islamization process begun by the torobe who formed a new class of leaders over and against the traditional nobles. This aptitude for leadership on the part of the torobe had already resulted in the establishment of Muslim states in Nigeria and Mali and apparently the same process was at work in Senegal.

The prominence of the torobe clerics in the formation of Islamic states is due in large measure to the fact that they constitute a type of fluid "open caste". The term "open caste" is used by Yaya Wane to denominate a pattern of group cohesion which is defined in terms of

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<sup>7</sup> R. Arnaud, "L'Islam et la politique musulmane française en Afrique Occidentale Française, "Afrique Française: Renseignements Coloniaux, (janvier, 1912), p.9; cited in Monteil, op. cit., p.110.

descent from Muslim saints. Because of their renown for piety, this group generally tends to restrict marriage of its members to those enjoying an equal reputation for religious purity. As a result, the torobe have become holy lineages originally formed from heterogeneous ethnic elements such as Fulani, Soninke, Wolof, and Moor. Group solidarity is maintained by their descent from one or more saintly ancestors.

According to Wane, this pseudo-caste has four major fields of activity: (1) political leadership based on religious; (2) Islamic scholarship and asceticism; (3) commercial activity and long distance trade; (4) agriculture. It is obvious that such a wide spectrum of activity prevents the torobe from becoming an occupational caste. Yet, despite differences in occupation, there are strong links between torobe and, whatever the social circumstances of an individual torobe may be, he always considers himself superior to a non-torobe.<sup>8</sup> This sense of pride coupled with occupational flexibility has enabled the torobe to become the major agents of Islamic propaganda in West Africa. Indeed, the majority of the jihads of the nineteenth century were begun by torobe such as Ma Ba Jakhu in Senegal, Admadu Sheku, Uthman Dan Fodio, and al-Hajj Umar Tall. Right down to the present day, most of the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya leaders in Senegal trace their origin back to torobe ancestors.<sup>9</sup>

The confrontation of Muslim torobe with the semi-pagan Wolof nobility was profoundly affected by the French penetration of the

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<sup>8</sup> Wane, op. cit., pp.34 - 37.

<sup>9</sup> F. Quesnot, "Les Cadres maraboutiques de l'Islam Senegalais" in Notes et etudes sur l'Islam Noir, (Recherches et Documents C.H.E.A.M. Paris, 1962), pp.131 - 194.

interior of Senegal in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the face of the French threat, the Muslims and the Wolof nobles formed an alliance aimed at expelling the French or, failing that, reducing their influence in the area. The principals in this alliance were Lat Dyor, the last independent Damel of Kayor, and two prominent Muslim holy men, the Tijani Ma Ba Jakhu, and Ahmadu Bamba, the founder of the Muridiyya Brotherhood.

Kayor was the most strategically situated of the Wolof States. It extended 120 kilometers from north to south along the Senegalese littoral and included the two major French settlements Saint Louis in the north and Dakar in the south. The ruler or Damel was chosen from one of seven noble matrilineages who competed with one another over the succession to the throne. Muslim influence was already strong in Kayor and many of the courtiers (dak) professed Islam. The ritual associated with the installation of the Damel seems to have been the responsibility of Muslim marabouts and the degree of Muslim influence corresponded to the third phase of symbiosis mentioned in Chapter Two (cf. pp.33 - 34).<sup>10</sup>

On the local level, Muslim holy men became village chiefs and the religious title serin (Ar. Shaikh; Ful. Tyerno) was added to the Wolof hierarchy of administrative functionaries. According to Monteil the serins soon began to enjoy a dominant role in the social structure of Kayor when the relationship between the tyeddo and the badolo became more and more strained. The peasant badolo lacked any effective leadership with which to defend themselves against the raids of the

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<sup>10</sup> See Monteil, op. cit., p.75 for a summary of Muslim influence at the court of the Damel.

crown slaves. These raids were marked by terrible violence and often peasants were carried off to be sold as slaves in order that the tyeddo might procure horses, money, grain, and the local alcoholic beverage called sangara. The addition of the tyeddo to alcohol sometimes induced them to pawn their rifles in order to obtain the potent liqueur.<sup>11</sup>

In this context, submission to a marabout was more than a change of religious affiliation. By submitting to a Muslim holy man, the convert ipso facto joined the ranks of a tariga which implied a network of believers united in a structured religious system. Tidiane Sy writes that affiliation to a tariga was actually a form of protest against the existing social system.

"The peasants who joined the communities led by marabouts were actually revolting against the traditional institutions of Kayor society. The marabouts, by attacking the traditional aristocracy, not only revolted against the impiety of the latter, but also responded to the popular sentiment of the victims of the political system. For this reason, the religious communities created in the second half of the nineteenth century must be viewed not merely as nuclei of cultural change, but rather as active fomentors of political agitation."<sup>12</sup>

As a result of the cleavage between peasants and rulers, the Damel and the other Wolof kings could no longer rely on peasant support for their military campaigns against one another or even against the French. Hence the Wolof rulers were forced to rely more and more on the tyeddo to buttress the tottering political system, so much so

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<sup>11</sup> Tidiane Sy, op. cit., p.80.

<sup>12</sup> La Confrérie Sénégalaise des Mourides, p.87.

that even though the tyeddo were technically crown slaves, they began to maintain a growing ascendancy over their so-called master. It was difficult to decide whether the slaves belonged to the master or the master to the slaves.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the antagonism within Wolof society, the threat of a common enemy brought the Damel and the marabouts into an alliance. This partnership greatly enhanced the social position of the Muslims who were exhorted by their marabouts to fight against the unbelievers. In return for this support, the Damel and many of his courtiers submitted to the religious authority of the marabouts. In effect, this meant the Islamization of the ruling class. However, after the defeat of the Wolof resistance movement, the nobles were deprived of their traditional offices and replaced by appointees of the colonial administration. The marabouts on the other hand, did not rely on secular office for their authority, but justified their claims in terms of the mystical power of baraka. Hence, the marabouts were not formally political figures and therefore they could not be deposed from political office which they did not fill. The colonial administration could remove the traditional leaders from their posts, but they were unable to strip the marabouts of their spiritual power. In this way the torobe clerics came to form an informal aristocracy whose claims to privilege and authority were based on religious principles. Religious solidarity under the leadership of the marabouts became an effective means of integrating Wolof society once military resistance was no longer possible. In this new situation, the Muslim clerics became the heirs

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<sup>13</sup> Montell, op. cit., p.88.

of the traditional nobility including Lat Dior, the national hero and symbol of Wolof aspirations.

Today, in the villages of Senegal, the griots or local bards, recite the epic deeds of the heroic Damel, Lat Dior, who died defending his people against the French. In the city of Dakar, the principle army camp bears his name. A play, written by the Senegalese dramatist Amadou Cisse, entitled "The Last Days of Lat Dior" was enthusiastically received by local audiences. Lat Dior has become the symbol of Senegalese aspirations and patriotism despite the fact that, as Damel of Kayor, he represented a political system which systematically oppressed the peasant population. The manner in which this oppressor of the peasants became transformed into a semi-religious symbol of patriotic fervor reveals the prime role of the Muslim leaders in rebuilding a sense of ethnic pride and cohesion in the wake of the French conquest.

Lat Dior became Damel of Kayor in 1862 after seizing the throne from the incumbent Ma-Dyodo. Kayor at that time was the only Wolof state which had refused to sign a treaty of cooperation with the French who were confined to trading posts along the coast, notably at Goree and St. Louis. In 1854, the Governor, Faidherbe, initiated an expansionary policy by exploiting the rivalries existing between Muslims and animists, hoping to eliminate any concerted effort to resist French penetration of the interior. Depending on circumstances, the administration would support the marabouts, or when it suited them, they would use the chiefs against the marabouts.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the French

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<sup>14</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.32.

viewed the jihad of Ma Ba Jakhu as a means of eliminating the tyeddo party in southern Senegal which would then be opened to French mercantile interests. This strategy was in accord with general policy regarding the Muslim brotherhoods later formulated by Dupont and Coppolani.<sup>15</sup>

In 1864 a French military agent wrote to Governor Faidherbe informing him that the French troops would move against Ma Ba as soon as the latter had destroyed the power of the tyeddo in Sine and Saloum.<sup>16</sup> French plans were implemented sooner than expected due to the sudden alliance of Lat Dior with Ma Ba. Indeed the French feared that this alliance presaged the creation of a "Tijani League" which would unite the various military leaders under the banner of the Tijani brotherhood.<sup>17</sup>

When the young Damel of Kayor manifested military designs aiming eventually at the elimination of the French, Faidherbe took steps to have him deposed. In pursuit of this objective a French column invaded Kayor and drove Lat Dior out of the kingdom. The ex-Damel fled south where he joined forces with Ma Ba after formally renouncing idolatry and openly professing Islam. Together the two leaders proclaimed their intention of exterminating or converting all the unbelievers of Sine, Baol, Walo, Kayor, and Jolof thereby insuring the triumph of the Quran in those lands.<sup>18</sup> Thus Lat Dior saw in Ma Ba a potent ally not only for winning back Kayor but also for the establishment of a

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<sup>15</sup> O. Dupont and X. Coppolani, Les Confréries religieuses musulmanes. Algiers, 1897, pp.287 - 289.

<sup>16</sup> O'Brien, ibid., p.32.

<sup>17</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.32; on the Tijani League see M. Klein, Islam and Imperialism in Senegal, p.130 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Papiers Ballot, no.19, cited by Monteil, op. cit., p.102.



unified Wolof state. The instrument of this policy was the  Jihad  declared by Ha Ba.

Ha Ba apparently attempted to make his newly-converted disciple a marabout but Lat Dior balked at taking such a step. Apparently Lat Dior's religious convictions were not deep enough for him to assume the mantle of a  mugaddam  of the Tijaniyya brotherhood.<sup>19</sup> In any case Lat Dior became the principal lieutenant of Ha Ba and together they campaigned in Jolof, Rip, and Sine. This cooperation was brought to an end when Ha Ba was killed in battle by the Serer in 1866. Despite this setback, Lat Dior continued the  Jihad  and his letters reveal that he assumed the title of "Commander of the Faithful", the same title assumed by Uthman Dan Fodio earlier in the century.<sup>20</sup>

After the death of Ha Ba, Lat Dior allied himself with another renowned marabout, Momar Anta Sally, who belonged to a  torobe  family renowned for learning and  baraka . Interestingly enough, although Momar's father had been a Tijani, Momar himself belonged to the Qadiriyya brotherhood.<sup>21</sup> As a sign of his favor, the  Damel  presented the marabout with one of his nieces in marriage. Later this marital alliance with the nobility was strengthened when, after the death of Lat Dior, Momar married one of the  Damel 's ex-wives. In 1871 the  Damel  was reinstated as ruler of Kayor by the French and Momar Anta Sally followed his patron back to his former kingdom. While in

<sup>19</sup> Archives du Gouvernement du Sénégal à Dakar, carton 13 G 271 cited by Monteil, p.103.

<sup>20</sup> Bamba Diop, "Lat Dior et le problème musulman",  Bull. IFAN  XVIII, ser. B (1965) p.513.

<sup>21</sup> O'Brien,  op. cit. , p.39.

Kayor Momar founded the village of Mbacke which was to become a centre of Islamic learning and henceforth became the name of Anta Sally's descendants. So influential did this village become that the Damel decided to fix his residence in its immediate vicinity.

Thus, in the critical period when French influence began to menace the political independence of the Wolof leaders, the mutual support that Muslims and traditional chiefs rendered each other gradually transformed the institution of chiefship itself. Legitimacy based merely on descent from royal lineages was no longer sufficient to insure the support of the badolo who were disaffected by the actions of the tyeddo and as a result had turned more and more to the marabouts for protection. By submitting to the Muslim holy men, the rulers of the Wolof not only shared in their baraka but also won over their peasant followers. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, the royal lineages had become Muslim and the authority of the traditional rulers was considerably enhanced in the eyes of their Muslim subjects. In this way the profession of Islam became one of the criteria for the legitimate exercise of authority by the Wolof ruling class.

However, the tyeddo still remained a source of friction between Muslim peasants and traditional leaders. On the other hand, the rulers of the Wolof states were unwilling to lose the mainstay of their armies, while on the other hand, the life style of the tyeddo was an insurmountable barrier to their conversion to Islam. However this obstacle standing in the way of a complete fusion of the role of marabout with that of traditional chief would be eliminated by the French conquest of Senegal which dismantled the indigenous political system.

In 1879, the French decided to erect a system of railways in order to tap the natural resources of the interior of Sudanese Hinterland. Lat Dior realised that the railway across his territory would in effect deprive him of a considerable amount of his sovereignty since French troops would be used to garrison the stations on the route. On 10 September 1879 the Damel had given his consent for the cession of the right of way for the railway lines. But when workers began to be recruited from among the peasants, the Damel refused to allow work to be continued and once more he led his tyeddo in open rebellion.<sup>22</sup> The Wolof leader attempted to enlist the aid of the Bur of Jolof and the Almamy of Futa Toro but these two leaders were wary of Lat Dior's political ambitions which envisaged the establishment of a unified Wolof state under his own domination. Realizing that help was not forthcoming from that quarter, the Damel fled to Baol where he encountered Ahmadu Bamba, the son of Momar Anta Sally. Bamba urged Lat Dior to use other means to combat the French and suggested that the Damel should devote himself entirely to religious observance and prayer in order to obtain God's help.<sup>23</sup> This suggestion seems to imply that Lat Dior was encouraged to become a marabout, in this case a member of the Qadiriyya brotherhood of which Bamba was a member. But Lat Dior refused this advice just as he had refused the identical proposal made several years earlier by the Tijani marabout Ma Ba. For the reception of the wird, or ritual investiture from either Ma Ba or Bamba would in effect imply that the Damel was subject to the authority

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<sup>22</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.99.

<sup>23</sup> A.M. Samb, Cadior Demb, Dakar, 1964, p.54; cited by Sy, op. cit., p.99.

of the marabouts. Despite the desperate situation in which he found himself, the Damel was unwilling to assent to a diminution of his royal prerogatives.

The French at this time realized that the entire political system of the Wolof states had to be radically altered if a stable peace was to be maintained. The final encounter between Lat Dior and the French took place at Dyakle (also spelled Dekkile or Deukhle) in 1886 which ended with the death of the by now legendary Wolof leader. By 1890 French and British pressure had eliminated many of the able Muslim leaders and it appeared that the Fulani empire of Sokoto represented the last hope of pious Muslims. However even this hope proved abortive when the battle of Burmi in 1903 brought the last independent theocratic state in the western Sudan under European rule.

The period which witnessed the final disintegration of the Wolof monarchies and the installation of colonial rule was also marked by a resurgence of popular religious feeling. Between 1880 and 1903 membership in the religious brotherhoods became synonymous with the profession of Islam in West Africa. One of the factors responsible for this phenomenon was the dominant role played by the marabouts in mobilizing and directing this mass religious movement into a coherent religious organization. An examination of the relationship of Ahmadu Bamba, the founder of the Muridiyya brotherhood, and Lat Dior will elucidate the process whereby the Muslim marabouts succeeded to the positions vacated by the Wolof nobles after their defeat at the hands of the French. This process of the transformation of the Wolof political system resulted in the creation of para-political structure

based on the hierarchical organization of the Muslim brotherhoods. Indeed, the Muridiyya brotherhood not only initiated this transformation, but in the process, it altered the structure of the other brotherhoods as well. All three major brotherhoods became para-political organizations whose activity had enormous consequences in the economic development of the colony.<sup>24</sup>

On the eve of the battle of Dyaqle, Lat Dior went to the village of Mbaake in Kayor to implore the blessing of the marabout Muhammad ben Habib Allah, popularly known as Ahmadu Bamba. Although the marabout was only about thirty years old, his reputation as a saint and scholar was second to none in Kayor. His father, Momar Anta Sally, had been closely associated with the  Jihad  of Ma Ba, and so it was not surprising that Lat Dior should seek counsel from the son of his one-time associate.

The religious background of Bamba is worthy of note. Soon after his father's death, he went to Mauretania to the zawiya of the great Qadiri Shaikh Sidia Baba where he was instructed in theology and in the principles of Maliki jurisprudence.<sup>25</sup> At the end of this period of instruction, Shaikh Sidia appointed Bamba Khalifa (Sidia's deputy) of the Qadiriyya among the Wolof.<sup>26</sup>

According to popular accounts, Lat Dior had had a premonition of his death and decided to pay one last visit to the Muslim holy man.

Their meeting was along one, in which Lat Dior told the marabout that he had come to say farewell forever, because,

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<sup>24</sup> F. Quesnot, "L'Influence du Mouridisme sur le Tidjanisme", Doc. C.H.E.A.M., No.3016, 30 Jan. 1959; this report is also included in Notes et Etudes sur l'Islam en Afrique Noire, Recherches et Documents C.H.E.A.M. 1962, eds. Bourlon, Quesnot et. al. 1962.

<sup>25</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.108.

<sup>26</sup> See M. Casenave "Les Mourides du Senegal", Doc. C.H.E.A.M., No.1741 (1950).

he said, "I want to have done with the white men at all costs today". Ahmadu Bamba promised to pray for him, so that peace might return. But Lat Dior persisted, asking the marabout simply for God's blessing. The marabout offered him a robe of percale, then 'spat' some verses of the Koran into his hands before allowing him to depart. <sup>27</sup>

In this account two aspects of Bamba's relationship with Lat Dior are illustrated. In the first place, it is evident that Bamba did not commit himself to Lat Dior's strategy of armed resistance. Indeed, at a previous encounter, Bamba stressed the primacy of religious activity in overcoming the French. Secondly, Bamba's superiority over Lat Dior is also apparent since the latter appears as a suppliant before his master. Thus, Lat Dior's action, which was imitated by other Wolof leaders, indicated that the support of God's servants, the marabouts, was necessary for the continuation of Wolof society. But the preservation of Wolof society could not be achieved through overt military resistance. In order to re-integrate the Wolof people, new forms of organization had to be employed under the aegis of God's servants, the marabouts.

After the death of Lat Dior, Kayor was divided into a confederation of small cantons each with its own chief. The head of the confederation was Demba War Sall, a former tyeddo of Lat Dior, who had defected to the French. The new chief had very limited powers and his main task was to keep the population tranquil. This meant in effect that he did not hesitate to oppress the peasants when they showed signs of restiveness. <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.13, citing A. Samb, Cadior Demb, p.54.

<sup>28</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.101.

This political re-organization of the Wolof kingdoms affected the entire social structure. With the elimination of the ruling matrilineages, the tyeddo and courtiers dependent on the rulers' patronage lost their function and status. The only alternative open to them was to become cultivators, an occupation which belonged to the despised badole and for which the tyeddo had little liking and less aptitude. The situation was rendered more acute by French insistence on converting the subsistence economy of the peasants to an export economy. This meant that the production of different crops was to be replaced by groundnut cultivation since the European market required the byproducts of the groundnut. Tidiane Sy summarizes the situation in the following words:

The Wolof farmer, subjected to the demands of the colonial economy -- a system of exchange which totally escaped his control -- was in effect obliged to cultivate the single product which the administration desired: the groundnut.<sup>29</sup>

As a result of this rigid policy the economic revolution which followed the political dismemberment of the Wolof states deepened the malaise of the Wolof of all classes and castes. In this situation, the marabouts, whose ritual power had been acknowledged by the former Wolof rulers, became the cornerstones for the reconstitution of the Wolof Society. In effect they became "sacred" leaders whose liminal status rendered them capable of exercising power within the new "secularized" political system established by the French.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p.103.

<sup>30</sup> See Georges Malecot, "Essai sur les structures politiques traditionnelles en Afrique noire française et leur évolution", Doc. C.H.E.A.M. No.4235. Malecot shows how the ritual authority of native leaders is increased when they are deprived of political power by the colonial government.

While this "sacralization" of authority is a result of the colonial intrusion, it cannot be explained merely as a negative response to an external threat. The Muridiyya and Tijaniyya Brotherhoods must also be considered as a positive attempt to fulfil the social expectations of their members. Thus, the question must be raised as to why it came about that the rituals and beliefs of Sufi Islam seemed to the Wolof, in Geertz' words, ". . . not merely appropriate but inevitable, not commendable opinions about an unknown reality which it was comforting or prudential or honourable to hold, but authentic apprehensions of a known one which it was impossible to deny . . ." <sup>31</sup> The answer to this question lies both in the nature of Wolof society itself, as well as in the conflict situations which the members of that society had to face. The role and status achieved by the shaikhs and mugaddams of the brotherhoods is due both to personal charismatic qualities and to a concatenation of circumstances which transformed charism into concrete activity.

Mention has already been made of the close relationship of the Wolof, Serer, and Tokolor ethnic groups and the migratory process which resulted in the present ethnic situation in most of Senegal. Since the nineteenth century the Wolof have appeared to be more vigorous than the other two groups and have gradually absorbed numbers of Tokolor and Serer. Several observers attribute Wolof adaptability and propensity to expand at the expense of their neighbours to their loss of their kinship structure which has weakened their attachment to the land and local family ties. Thus the Serer are true peasants in the sense that they cling to ancestral farmsteads whereas the Wolof have become more involved in trading and marketing groundnuts which demand a certain mobility and freedom.



Secondly, unlike the Serer, the Wolof have retained little of their traditional religion which remains largely conjectural. Hence the fluid, open state of Wolof social structure made it receptive to the religious and economic changes which resulted from the colonial experience.<sup>32</sup> This adaptive tendency was reinforced by the administrative reorganization of the Wolof states which had as its professed aim the destruction of the native feudality in order that the peasants might be freed from the control of their native rulers.

The chiefly families and their tyeddo clients adjusted to the new situation with much more difficulty. The tyeddo, formerly feared by the peasants, were completely discredited and reduced to penury. The members of the chiefly families were either removed from office or absorbed into the colonial bureaucracy as salaried local guardians of the peace. Appointments were made in consideration of their modern skills such as literacy in French, or their loyalty and submissiveness to the colonial government. Consequently their authority depended on the coercive power of the French rather than upon traditional criteria of legitimacy. Finally their role as tax collectors for the administration confirmed their unpopularity in the eyes of their wards.<sup>33</sup>

Within a few years the Wolof had become a politically acephalous society. Yet such a state of affairs could not continue since Wolof social structure was highly stratified. In this anomalous situation,

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<sup>32</sup> See J. Fouquet, "la Traite des arachides dans le pays de Kaolack et ses consequences economiques, sociales et juridiques, "Etudes Senegalaises, (Centre I.F.A.N., St. Louis du S n gal, 1958) p.31. On Wolof religion, see A. Diop, "La Culture Wolof: Traditions et Changements", Notes Africaines, No.121 (I.F.A.N. janvier, 1969), pp.1 - 7.

<sup>33</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., pp.33 - 34.

with a rigidly organized series of ranks and castes lacking a central organizing principle, it was only natural that the Wolof community turned to the liminal leaders, the marabouts, whose power and authority could not be challenged by the infidel French since that power and authority did not rest on formal political criteria. Thus submission to the shaikhs of the brotherhoods would resurrect the Wolof social order as an informal structure under the integrating banner of Islam.

Soon after the battle of Dyaqle, groups of tyeddo and dispossessed peasants began to migrate to the village of Mbacke in Baol, the residence of Ahmadu Bamba. Because of their poverty and ignorance of Islam, the orthodox villagers raised objections to these new disciples settling in their midst. As a result, Bamba was forced to leave M'backe and moved to a new site nearby which was given the name of Darou Salam. While there the Sufi leader had a revelation concerning the future of his new group of disciples and a new religious centre which would be the headquarters of the movement. This centre was to be called Touba (Ar. "happiness") and would one day become the Mecca of Senegal.

This exodus to Darou Salam caused considerable anxiety to the French administration who were wary of anything that smacked of native dissatisfaction with the colonial system. In 1891 Bamba went to the then capital of Senegal, St. Louis, to declare his loyalty but this did little to allay French suspicions of his followers who had only recently been implacable enemies of the new order. That same year a French detachment invaded Darou Salam and dispersed Bamba's followers. However they soon regrouped and their numbers increased when the followers

of the expelled Bur of Jolof, Al Buri N'diaye, decided to submit to Bamba. The French saw this action as a direct threat to their policy and did all they could to limit access to Darou Salam. As a result of this harassment Bamba moved northeast to the province of Jolof which still enjoyed a relative freedom from French supervision because of its remoteness. However when the Bur of Jolof himself became a disciple of Bamba, French suspicions were aroused once more. Despite the marabout's protests that his movement was purely spiritual, it became apparent to the colonial administration that the greater part of his followers consisted of the remnants of the armies of Kayor, Baol, and Jolof. Indeed Bamba's move to Jolof was significant since Jolof had been the original home of the Wolof people.

A French army marched into Jolof and took both Bamba and the Bur captive in 1895. After a trial during which most of the evidence against Bamba was supplied by the newly-appointed chiefs, the marabout was sentenced to exile in Gabon. This period of exile which was to last seven years, only served to increase the authority of the shaikh who now became a martyr for Islam.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, through the intercession of Shaikh Sidya Baba, the leader of the Qadiriyya in Mauretania, Bamba was allowed to return to Senegal, his sanctity and prestige higher than ever. However his sojourn in Senegal was brief since the French sent him to the sawiya of Shaikh Sidya at Souet al Ma in Mauretania. Apparently the administration wished Bamba to follow the example of Sidya and several other tariqa leaders in their discountenance of violence and Mahdism and their

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<sup>34</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.114. Most of Bamba's Arabic writings were composed during this period.

cooperation with French policy. This policy succeeded among the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya leaders, and it appears that Bamba himself had no objections to such a course of action. The difficulty lay in the fact that the Murids (disciples) of Bamba consisted of many ex-tyeddo whose knowledge of Islam was slight and whose susceptibility to jihadist or mahdist propaganda resulted from their own violent background.<sup>35</sup>

Interestingly enough, it was during this period of exile that Bamba adopted a new ritual formula or wird which, in effect, marked off his disciples from the ordinary members of the Qadiriyya brotherhood. However this ritual separation did not entail a break in relations with the parent order since Monteil mentions the presence of Mauretanian Qadiris at Touba and quotes the late Khalifa of the Muridiyya, Falilou Mbacke, to the effect that "Mourides and the people of Shaikh Sidya are the same."<sup>36</sup>

The period 1886 - 1903 marks the first stage in the development of the Muridiyya brotherhood which arose as part of a long political and religious process which transformed Senegalese society. Indeed the colonial intrusion confirmed and, in certain respects, hastened the process of Islamization which was at the same time a Wolofization of hitherto disparate groups. The person of Ahmadu Bamba symbolizes this transformation and amalgamation. Although a member of the torobe caste of the Tokolor ethnic group, his religious role not only transformed his family into Wolof but also did the same for his followers.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.119.

<sup>36</sup> Monteil, op. cit., pp.174 and 189.

<sup>37</sup> Monteil, p.81; O'Brien, op. cit., p.177.

This chapter has so far been concerned with the religious and social changes in Senegal from 1886 to 1903. Unfortunately material relative to the process of Islamization and social change in Hausaland is insufficient to warrant analysis. Most of the studies of the Hausa-Fulani state are concerned with the administrative structure and bureaucratic apparatus of the Sokoto empire and only incidentally refer to the social and economic circumstances of the population. The recent attempts to deal with traditional Hausa society and religion have relied on conjectural reconstruction.<sup>38</sup> But despite this paucity of material, there are several elements of similarity between the case of Senegal and that of Nigeria since torobe clerics were at work in both areas. The significant difference between the two regions was the success of the jihad initiated in 1904 by Uthman Dan Fodio which resulted in the subjection of the Hausa states to the Fulani torobe under the suzerainty of Sokoto.

As a result of the jihad, the allocation of offices became the prerogative of the descendants of the Fulani jihadists and their clients who comprised the sarakuna or ruling class. This meant that the religious leaders became founders of political dynasties which developed a sense of ethnic distinctiveness in order to vindicate their claim to legitimacy and to prevent the subject Hausa from gaining access to political power. In Senegal, on the other hand, the torobe manifested an extraordinary aptitude in assimilating themselves to Wolof social

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<sup>38</sup> See the controversy between M.G. Smith and E.R. Yeld where Smith denies the validity of Yeld's attempt to use Kebbi as a model of Hausa society before the Fulani conquest. E.R. Yeld, "Islam and Social Stratification in Northern Nigeria", British Journal of Sociology, vol. XI, No.2 (1960), 112-128; M.G. Smith, "Kebbi and Hausa Stratification" British Journal of Sociology, XII, No.1 (1961) 52-64; M.G. Smith, "The Hausa System of Social Status", Africa, XXIX, No.3 (1959), 239-252.

norms and thus did not develop a sense of ethnic superiority. Thus in Senegal the torobe gave up their Fulani language and identified themselves with the Wolof. In Nigeria, even though the Fulani rulers gave up their own language for that of the Hausa, they still jealously guarded their own ethnic superiority by maintaining a social system quite similar to that which sharply distinguished gormi (nobles) from badolo (peasants) in Senegal.

The fact that the sarakuna class professed a very rigorous form of Islam tended to prevent dissent from being manifested in a religious idiom. This fact explains the lack of overt religious activity on the part of the Muslim brotherhoods in Nigeria until relatively recent times.

A decisive factor in the evolution of the two societies was the different nature of the colonial administrations which were imposed on the two countries. After the battle of Burmi in 1903, the British assumed control of the greater part of the Fulani Empire in Hausaland. Unlike the French, the British did not tamper with the Fulani administrative machinery but left it practically intact in order to administer the huge area through the native rulers and institutions. This is the essence of the much discussed policy of "Indirect Rule."<sup>39</sup>

One of the most significant changes which the British did implement in the newly conquered territory was the abolition of the slave trade which affected the Fulani practice of compulsory unpaid labour and the obligation of military service. A second result of this reform was the

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<sup>39</sup> See M. Hiskett, "A Critical Introduction" in C.L. Temple, Native Races and Their Rulers (London, Frank Cass, 2nd Edition, 1968) p. xxix.

radical alteration of the gandu which was the fundamental unit of the domestic economy. Before the advent of the British, the gandu was a farming compound whose operation depended on slave labour and not merely on the gandu head and his family. Throughout the Fulani emirates there existed communities of slave cultivators (Hausa: rinji, rindawa; Fulani: rumada) whose Fulani masters received a share of all crops harvested. With the abolition of slavery, the gandu could no longer rely on a relatively large labour source but of necessity had to depend on a work force drawn from the extended family. But as M.G. Smith notes, the introduction of cash crops for export and trade has given rise to disputes within the extended family which has caused a further disintegration of the gandu.<sup>40</sup> Greenberg also shows how the Hausa system of land tenure was so altered by the Fulani that the patrilineal exogamous clans had to surrender their local autonomy to the Fulani District Heads. This, both the British and the Fulani in their own way weakened local agricultural institutions which were dependent on collectivities in order to cultivate large tracts of land. As a result, large numbers of peasant cultivators were forced to seek employment in the urban centres or turn to long distance trade which is a well known metier of the Hausa commoners.

On the local level it would appear that the situation in Nigeria and in Senegal was similar during the initial period of colonial rule.

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The Economy of the Hausa Communities of Zaria, Colonial Research Studies, No.16 (Colonial Office, London 1955) pp.20 and 102. See also J. Greenberg, "Islam and Clan Organization among the Hausa" Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. III, No.1 (1947), 195-211; P. Hill, Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa, ch.7 "Farms and Farmers in a Hausa Village", (Cambridge, 1970).

Both areas were encouraged to develop cash crops for the export trade. Because of climatic similarities the cash crops suitable for cultivation were the same in both instances, although the French soon encouraged the cultivation of the groundnut to the exclusion of other crops in Senegal. But because of the difference in administration the development of the two colonies diverged widely. In Senegal the old aristocracy had been eliminated and only minor administrative posts were given to native leaders. As a result, religious brotherhoods became an alternative means by which popular religious figures could exercise authority outside the framework imposed by the French. As heirs of the displaced ruling class with whom they had been allied through marriage they were able to organize the peasants and the tyedde as well into cohesive groupings which had wide popular appeal.

This fusion of religious and traditional leadership criteria was impossible in Nigeria since the ruling Fulani vindicated their legitimacy by appealing to religious values. Hence an alternative religious system such as that represented by the brotherhoods was viewed as a threat to the Fulani hegemony. This explains why mahdism and similar expressions of religious dissent were quickly suppressed by the Fulani Emirs. However when tension developed between the various emirs or between an individual Emir and the British authorities, an intensification of brotherhood activity was encouraged in order to win popular support for the local ruler in his quest for a larger measure of local autonomy.

The circumstances attending the succession crisis in the emirate of Zaria in 1920 illustrate the role of religious affiliation in demarcating factions within the Fulani ruling class. The Emir of Zaria, Aliyu, was



suspected of anti-British activity. As a result, at the request of the British, the Emir of Sokoto deposed Aliyu. Aliyu's successor, Ibrahim, was enthroned without Sokoto being consulted which was an overt violation of the prerogatives of the Emir of Sokoto who was sovereign of all the Fulani emirates. In addition, there were other peculiarities in Ibrahim's appointment. He was promoted from a minor office and his accession departed from the rotating system by which the four major Fulani clans in Zaria took turns in administering the emirate. Significantly this period marks a heightening of Tijaniyya activity in Zaria which resulted in both Aliyu and Ibrahim becoming members of the brotherhood. By joining the Tijaniyya tariqa Aliyu and Ibrahim not only signified their personal adherence to a Muslim reform movement but their action symbolized the political tension with Sokoto since the Emir of Sokoto was khalifa of the Qadiriyya order. Hence Zaria's encouragement of the Tijaniyya expressed the estrangement of the two emirates on the political level.<sup>41</sup> The British were forced to act since conflicts between the various emirates would weaken the system of indirect rule.

Because of the nature of indirect rule in Nigeria, the emirs were confirmed as sole legitimate rulers and guardians of the social order. Religious leaders, or malams, were relegated to secondary positions as advisors to the emirs and higher dignitaries. In effect, they were clients of the emirs and as such their influence was restricted since their role consisted in the clarification of scholarly theological and

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<sup>41</sup> M.G. Smith, Government in Zazzau, pp. 223 - 225.

judicial theories. As a result the scholar-malams lost contact with the mass of the peasant population.<sup>42</sup> Popular manifestation of dissent was expressed by the mahdist movement and the growth of the Tijaniyya tarīqa which began to penetrate Northern Nigeria in the late nineteenth century, a period marked by social upheaval which rendered the lot of the gentry and free farmers particularly arduous. The comparative prosperity of the towns at this time only served to exacerbate the cleavage between peasant cultivators and town dwellers.<sup>43</sup>

In general, it appears that the rural Hausa were slowly adding a religious note to their feeling of discontent under their Fulani masters. This sense of injustice was sharpened by the development of cash crop farming, principally the production of groundnuts and cotton which have become the major sources of revenue for Northern Nigeria. In a recent study, evidence was presented to show that the Tijaniyya order was found mainly among those farmers who were involved in groundnut production in the Kano emirate.<sup>44</sup> French investigators also mention the connection between agricultural production and the Tijaniyya brotherhood.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, on the local level, the social and religious changes that took place in rural Senegal and Nigeria were similar in several respects. Both societies had been in contact with Islam for centuries but Muslim influence began to penetrate rural areas only during the colonial period

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S.F. Nadel, Nupe Religion, p.236.

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M. Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent in Hausaland, 1800 - 1968", Africa, Vol. XL, No.4 (1968), 352.

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J. Paden, "The Influence of Religious Elites on Political Culture and Community: Integration in Kano Nigeria", Ph.D. thesis (Harvard, 1968) p.286.

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G. Nicholas, H. Doumesche, Maman dan Mouche, "Etude socio-économique de deux villages Hausa", Etudes Nigeriennes, No.22 (Paris, 1968), 177-178.

when the shaikhs of the brotherhoods began to exercise influence in the more remote rural areas of West Africa. At the same time their services were frequently employed by chiefs and leaders who saw in the baraka of the holy men a potent medicine to cure their illnesses and to ensure the success of crops and military ventures. In this way the Muslim holy men served as a bridge between rulers and peasants which gave them a liminal status within a particular society.

Due to the different policies pursued by the British and the French colonial governments, the religious and political roles of the holy men diverged considerably in the two regions. In Senegal, the Muslim leaders filled a vacuum left by the destruction of the traditional political order. In Nigeria, the traditional political system, buttressed by the religious claims of the Fulani, received the added support of the colonial power through the implementation of the policy of indirect rule. Hence, the Muslim holy men, especially if they were Hausa, did not have access to political office. Furthermore, excessive religious activity on a popular level risked incurring the suspicions of the Fulani ruling class. For the Fulani were well aware of the emotive force of ritual and its revolutionary potential since they themselves had achieved power through the jihad waged by Uthman dan Fodio against the lax Hausa rulers. As a result, religious activity on the part of the brotherhoods, while remaining clandestine, nevertheless continued to gain adherents among the peasants. Finally, the prospect of national independence and the end of indirect rule threatened to upset the unchallenged political monopoly enjoyed by the Fulani. Thus, in the late 1940's and early 1950's the Tijaniyya order

began to publicly agitate against the status quo especially in Kano Province, where the emir had been engaged in a long-standing political vendetta with the Sokoto dynasty personified by the Sardauna of Sokoto. (see Chapter VI).

The opposition between Sokoto and Kano was symbolized by the rivalry between the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya orders in Nigeria. The Sokoto Caliphate became the object of criticism by religious reformers who viewed the panoply and pomp surrounding the emirs as a betrayal of the principles of the jihad waged by dan Fodio. M.G. Smith has shown how the Fulani rulers try to limit criticism of their life style by discouraging a wide distribution of the writings of Uthman.<sup>46</sup> In addition the emirs and their Qadiri clients seldom participate in communal ritual assemblies (hadra) which is a mark of tariqa activity. This lack of ritual activity on the part of the Fulani is due to the fact that popular religious assemblies are frequently the scenes of violent disputes and protests against the local political or religious authority.<sup>47</sup>

Thus, Sa'adi's anecdote concerning the relation of kings and dervishes (holy men or Sufis) can be applied to the situation in northern Nigeria.<sup>48</sup> The Fulani rulers, although descended from religious reformers had been transformed into kings whose power and authority depended more and more on the coercive force at their disposal. This coercive force was given added strength by the British colonial regime.

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"Historical and Cultural Conditions of Political Corruption Among the Hausa", Comparative Studies in Society and History, VI, No.2 (1964), 175.

<sup>47</sup> A. Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, p.136 - 137.

<sup>48</sup> See page 47.

In Senegal the role of the marabouts was exempt from such ambiguities. The leading marabouts of Senegal had remained outside the sphere of colonial government and remained religious leaders. At the same time their connection with the defeated aristocracy enabled them to assume the mantle of the traditional Wolof leaders and thereby re-integrate Wolof society through the tariga organization. The religious movement inaugurated by the Muridiyya and Tijaniyya in Senegal had a practical ethic which immersed their members in agricultural production. This ethical aspect of the tariga organization coincided with the colonial administration's desire to encourage the export of groundnuts. Hence the work ethic of the tarigas in Senegal made them essential to the economic well-being of the state.

#### CHAPTER IV

### From A Religious Movement To An Agricultural Monopoly: The Brotherhoods And The Economy Of Senegal - 1927-1940.

An administrative report dealing with the commercial activity of the Murid brotherhood viewed with considerable misgiving the involvement of the marabouts in the groundnut trade. The report indicates that the French were fearful that the profit accruing to the marabouts would enable them to buy arms for their followers. P.J. Andre wrote in February 1923 that Ahmadu Bamba was not above suspicion in this regard.

"A trustworthy informant indicates that the houses which have purchased groundnuts have not benefitted by the sale of manufactured products nor by the money which is given to the people. A substantial part of the money is, in effect, sent to Ahmadu Bamba who uses it to store up stocks of gunpowder."

The report goes on to say:

"The soldiers of the 4th division at Dakar, disciples of Ahmadu Bamba, allege that the marabout is aware of events in Dahomey. They have been talking about the 'Wolof Nation.' It is imperative that we know precisely what the real aims of Ahmadu Bamba are." <sup>1</sup>

This report concerning the activity of certain disciples of Ahmadu Bamba reflects the opinion of certain administrative circles which viewed the Muridiyya as a hostile organization which embodied the latent nationalism of the Wolof ethnic group. Nevertheless the testimony of other authorities indicates that the focus of this movement was the person of Bamba himself who showed a complete disinterest in exercising authority over his religious subjects. The Governor of Senegal, William Ponty, maintained that Bamba's writings did not reveal

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<sup>1</sup> Report of P.J. Andre, February 1923 in Archives Senegalaises, cited by Sy, op. cit., p.118.

any of the subversive ideas attributed to him and the marabout's personal conduct did not manifest hostility to the administration.<sup>2</sup>

Gradually the French realized that Bamba was not a dangerous fanatic bent on waging a jihad against the infidels. As a result, the attitude of the colonial government shifted to a more accurate assessment of the Muridiyya in the light of the economic priorities of the export trade. The Muridiyya brotherhood with its tightly knit authority structure and its practical emphasis on the ethical and religious value of work, became an important factor in the development of the Senegalese economy. This changed policy had already secured results during the First World War when Muridiyya marabouts delivered hundreds of talibes to the recruiting stations at the behest of the government. For this co-operation, Bamba was awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honour.<sup>3</sup>

One of the ironies in this change of administration policy was that the railway project, which had been the catalyst in Lat Dior's rebellion and eventual downfall, now became a vehicle of Murid expansion. In 1923 the rail link from Dakar to Kayes (in present day Mali) was completed opening up the Senegalese hinterland to rapid commercial and agricultural expansion. In 1929 groundnut production had become the major crop and exports that year reached a record 400,000 tons. A comparison between annual exports of groundnuts and the

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<sup>2</sup> Letter of August 1909, Archives Sénégalaises, cited by Sy p.122.

<sup>3</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.46.

rise in Murid membership reveals the correspondence between groundnut production and the activity of the Brotherhood.

<u>Groundnut Exports</u>		<u>Murid Membership</u>	
Year	Tons	Year	No. of disciples
1885	45,061	1886	About 30
1900	140,000	1915	65,000
1914	280,000	1927	100,000
1938	600,000	1953	400,000
1965	984,677	1962	423,273

(Figures based on information in Peterec, The Port of Dakar and West African Development (New York, 1967) and O'Brien, passim)

From 1912 to 1927, the year of Bamba's death, the Murids broke out of the cercles of Baol and Kayor and began to move eastward towards the semi-arid Ferlo district. This area had lacked permanent settlers and consequently was ideal for the carving out of large estates which could be devoted to groundnut cultivation. By moving eastward the Murid leaders could offer their disciples greater prosperity and relative security. The remoteness of these new settlements rendered them more difficult to control and hence they were ready refuges for those Senegalese who wished to avoid conscription, forced labour, or taxation. A further result was that the Murid expansion also involved the expansion of the Wolof ethnic group since the vast majority of the rank and file of the brotherhood were Wolof.<sup>4</sup>

During this period of expansion, the administration began to encourage the marabouts to open up the new lands. The slogan of the brotherhood "Work is Part of Religion" indicated the economic advantages inherent in a policy which favored the expansion of the group. Although examples of Muslim holy men forming agricultural settlements are not rare in West Africa, the hierarchic structure of the brotherhood and the

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<sup>4</sup> See P. Marty, Les Mourides d'Amadou Bamba, (Paris, Leroux, 1913), pp.144 - 160.



collective devotion to the founder moulded the group into a coherent organization which could be more effectively utilised in furthering the designs of the government. Secondly, the marabouts could be effective agents in keeping the population quiescent, if their energies were taken up by agricultural production. So successful was this policy, that the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya marabouts began to imitate the example of their Muridiyya counterparts by also encouraging their disciples to work for them on large agricultural estates.

The Tijaniyya marabouts had, on the whole, confined themselves to religious and moral teaching and their religious centre at Tivouane has been called by one observer "une véritable université populaire."<sup>5</sup> Of the 1,385 marabouts in Senegal who were engaged in teaching in the Qur'an schools, 963 were Tijanis. This scholastic activity of the Tijaniyya was well suited to the relatively stable, free peasant population (badolo) which constituted the majority of the membership of the order. But in the competition which developed over the acquisition of new land the Muridiyya prove to be more successful and efficient than the Tijaniyya. As a result, in 1925 the leaders of the two Tijani branches in Senegal, Abu Bakr Sy and Seydou Nourou Tall, protested to the Lieutenant Governor about the activity of the Muridiyya.

This tension between the two brotherhoods was soon resolved when the Tijaniyya leaders adopted the Muridiyya practice of forming large communities of disciples who worked the fields for their respective

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<sup>5</sup> Quesnot, op. cit., 1962, p.117.

shaikh. Within a few years the doctrine of sanctification through work became a general feature of Islam in Senegal. As a result the brotherhoods were transformed from religious co-operatives anchored in the economic life of the colony. In this way the process of adaptation and re-integration of Wolof society after the destruction of the traditional authority system was aided and abetted by the economic imperatives of the groundnut trade which was essential to the well-being of the colony. The charisma of the original religious leaders was routinized when their descendants became managers of a vast agricultural enterprise. Indeed it was only after the deaths of Malik Sy, the Tijani leader and saint, and Ahmadu Bamba that the organizational structures of the two brotherhoods were elaborated and stabilized through the covert support of the Administration. Thus the Administration intervened when disputes in both brotherhoods arose about the succession to the office of Khalifa General. This intervention assured that succession to the Caliphate was to be decided in terms of genealogical descent rather than in terms of religious sanctity or learning. In this way the baraka of the original founder has become institutionalized. Weber's description of this process is apposite in this context:

In the case of hereditary charism, recognition is no longer paid to the charismatic qualities of the individual, but to the legitimacy of the position he has acquired by hereditary succession. This may lead in the direction either of traditionalization or legalization. The concept of "divine right" is fundamentally altered and now comes to mean authority by virtue of a personal right which is not dependent on the recognition of those subject to authority.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, (Glencoe Ill. Free Press, 1947) p.365.

The routinization of the charisma of Muslim leaders such as Ahmadu Bamba can only be understood in terms of the political and social milieu in which that same charisma operated. While the appeal of the Muridiyya and the Tijaniyya in Senegal can be seen as a defensive response to colonial domination, their long term success is due to the fact that the brotherhood elites adapted themselves to the prevailing pattern of Wolof social organization by giving the customary system of ranks a religious raison d'etre. Thus the badolo or free peasants grouped themselves under the leadership of the Sy family in order to preserve their land rights. The tyeddo and dispossessed nobility tended to gravitate to the Muridiyya because of Ahmadu Bamba's close association with the Lat Dior. In addition the lenient attitude of the Muridiyya with respect to Islamic observance and scholarship has enabled many tyeddo and gormi (nobles) to join the order with a minimal grasp of the essentials of Islamic belief.

The maintenance of the power structure of the brotherhoods in Senegal is due to three factors: (1) the development of the marabouts into a distinctive ruling elite whose solidarity is maintained by endogamy. (2) The institution of agricultural settlements called dara (Ar. house) which serve as collectivities for indoctrination, colonization of new lands, and economic co-operatives. (3) The more recent institution of the da'ira (Ar. agency) which is the urban analogue of the dara. The da'ira is primarily an association of urban disciples (talibes) who meet at regular intervals to engage in

communal ritual and to collect funds for the support of the shaikhs and other leaders of the two brotherhoods. Thus by endogamy among the elite and institutional adaptation in the rural and urban context the brotherhoods have managed to maintain their influence in Senegal despite the changes which have occurred both during the colonial period and after. Each of these factors will be examined in turn in order to discover the process whereby the brotherhoods have "Wolofized" Islam in Senegal and, in so doing have made the Wolof the dominant ethnic group in the country.

### The Religious Elites.

The list of the leading marabouts of the three brotherhoods in Senegal reveals a definite tendency for certain families to monopolize the more prestigious religious offices within the groups. The leadership of the Qadiriyya order is restricted to three Mauretanian families with the result that the Qadiriyya shaikhs have not been as active in the economic and social movements which have occupied their confreres in the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya brotherhoods.<sup>7</sup>

The Tijaniyya marabouts are grouped around several families who exercise enormous influence in Senegal. The Sy family has a monopoly of the office of Khalifa-General of the Tijaniyya in West Africa. The Tall family, who represent the Tokolor ethnic group, derives its prestige from the illustrious Hajj Umar Tall, the jihad leader of the nineteenth century. The grandson of the latter, Seydou Nourou, has been given the title of "Grand Marabout de l'Afrique Occidentale" which

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<sup>7</sup> See Quesnot, "Les Cadres maraboutiques", op. cit., p.171 - 180.

is the second highest religious rank in Senegal. Seydou Nourou has recognized the Khalifa General as his religious superior in Senegal. Other leading Tijaniyya families are the Niass of Kaolakh, the Kane, and the N'Dieguens. These families are all related by marriage and, with the exception of the Niass, they all trace their ancestry to torobe leaders.

The Muridiyya represent an even greater concentration of authority within the Mbacke clan. Indeed Quesnot maintains that high offices in the Muridiyya are an exclusive prerogative of the Mbacke clan, all of whom are descendants of Ahmadu Bamba.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the rank of shaikh is almost exclusively hereditary. Indeed, this attachment to the hereditary principle is so strong that certain talibes (disciples) may recognize a woman as their leader if the male line is extinct. Thus, Mame Saye Diop succeeded her father in 1943 and is still active in brotherhood affairs. This tolerance of women holding an office usually reserved to men is most unusual in Muslim brotherhoods. The Ta'us or genealogical tree representing the transmission of baraka in the Mbacke family pictures nine women who are considered important enough to be classed with the great leaders of the order.<sup>9</sup> This practice is a remnant of the earlier Wolof matrilineal system.

Among the Muridiyya the baraka of Ahmadu Bamba has become an attribute of the Mbacke clan thereby making the clan a hereditary elite. As a consequence, it is almost impossible for new shaikhs to be designated unless they can prove descent from Bamba or his close rela-

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<sup>8</sup> Quesnot, C.H.E.A.M., 1962, p.158.

<sup>9</sup> O'Brien, p.109; Montell, 1966, p.193.

tives. The ultimate criterion for the attainment of the rank of shaikh is recognition by talibes. This means that there is no ritual "consecration" of a religious leader. When a descendant of the Mbacke inherits his father's talibes, he is automatically a shaikh. This practice contrasts markedly with the ritual designation of a muqaddam or shaikh among the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya where the religious aspect of the rank is paramount. O'Brien explains this paucity of ritual induction in the Muridiyya in terms of the early history of the brotherhood.

The absence of ritual among the Mourides, the choice of the elite 'from below' was probably the consequence of the extremely rapid expansion of the brotherhood in its early days, which was difficult to control or direct, particularly during the long periods of exile or forced isolation of the founder. The brotherhood was at this time an explosively expanding mass movement, whose growth was too rapid and too spontaneous to be effectively controlled by any formally established hierarchy; then indeed the people's voice had become the voice of God.<sup>10</sup>

However, this period of relative equality has long passed and today the social distance between talib and shaikh is very marked. Submission to one's spiritual mentor is, of course, a feature of Sufi ideology and the traditional teaching of the Tijaniyya emphasizes unquestioned and exclusive loyalty to the successors of Ahmad al Tijani.<sup>11</sup> This attachment to the person of the shaikh has been reinforced by traditional beliefs in the magical prowess of holy men against the onslaughts of witches and evil spirits.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> O'Brien, p.108.

<sup>11</sup> Abun Nasr, op. cit., p.166.

<sup>12</sup> See Greenberg, "The Influence of Islam on a Sudanese Religion, (New York, 1946), passim.

While there appears to be little or no ritual attached to the installation of a shaikh of the Muridiyya, the submission of a talib is done through a stylized ritual act. Whether or not the Tijaniyya muqaddam undergoes an elaborate ritual initiation is not clear. Some muqaddams need only acquire a written ijaza (letter of authorization) from their superior to exercise the rank of ritual leader.<sup>13</sup> This act of submission (Wolof: njebbel) is an essential prerequisite to membership in the brotherhood, be it Tijaniyya, Qadiriyya, or Muridiyya. But among the Muridiyya the terms of the submission are more absolute than among the other two orders.

Normally the act of submission to a Murid shaikh is made in late adolescence but it may be done by an adult relative on behalf of a child. If the shaikh dies, the njebbel must be renewed before the shaikh's successor, normally his brother or eldest son. The wording of the formula depends on the degree of relationship of the successor to the deceased shaikh. When the new shaikh is not a close relative of the deceased shaikh, the full formula must be pronounced, otherwise the talib need only say "I attach myself to you". This distinction indicates the importance of kinship relations among the maraboutic families.

The ritual associated with the njebbel indicates the extent of the shaikh's authority over his talibes. The candidate kneels before the shaikh and recites the complete formula of submission: "I submit my body and soul to you. I will do everything you order me and abstain from anything you forbid me". The shaikh pronounces a formula of

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<sup>13</sup> See Abun Nasr, The Tijaniyya; O'Brien, op. cit., p.103.

benediction and spits into the hands of the talib, who then rubs his hands over his face. This action symbolizes the fact that the initiate is in the hands of the shaikh just as a corpse is in the hands of the person preparing it for burial. The shaikh then accepts the submission, urging the initiate to obey his orders. A small offering to the shaikh concludes the ceremony.<sup>14</sup>

The njebbel is the basis of the organizational structure of the brotherhood. Its emphasis on absolute obedience to the shaikh marks off the Muridiyya from the Qadiriyya. In the njebbel of the Qadiriyya, the initiate is primarily concerned with a profession of faith and a willingness to observe the precepts of Islam. Only after this profession is made, does the initiate make a vague promise to obey the shaikh. The Tijaniyya, in contrast to the Muridiyya and the Qadiriyya, do not have a formal rite of initiation. One becomes a Tijani by receiving permission to perform the wird or prayer ritual of the brotherhood.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, it appears that the Muridiyya order differs from the Tijaniyya and the Qadiriyya in two major respects. The Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya religious leaders are inducted into their religious offices through a specific ritual formula, while the Muridiyya shaikhs receive their rank through hereditary succession. Thus, one who inherits talibes, ipso facto, is accorded the title of shaikh. Since almost all Muridiyya shaikhs have become clustered around a few families associated with or descended from Ahmadu Bamba, it follows that no talib can become a shaikh unless he is a member of one of these core families. On the

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<sup>14</sup> Monteil, op. cit., p.199, O'Brien, op. cit., p.85.

<sup>15</sup> O'Brien, p.86.



other hand, high religious office is theoretically open to all members of the other two brotherhoods since the office of mugaddam is achieved through religious criteria and not through genealogical descent.

Hence it is possible for a Tijani or Qadiri to attain eminence within the Qadiriyya or Tijaniyya, provided he is endowed with the necessary spiritual and scholarly qualifications. Actually in fact the highest ranks are reserved to the descendants of the major families whose founders are considered saints and whose baraka has become tied to physical rather than spiritual descent.

Since the death of Ahmadu Bamba, the recruitment of Murid elites has been standardized so that shaikhs are almost all directly descended from those followers of Bamba who were designated shaikhs during the founder's lifetime. But as the descendants of these shaikhs become more and more numerous, the problem of determining the inheritance of disciples becomes more difficult. Currently there have been a number of disputes concerning the adherence of talibes to one or other of a dead marabout's heirs. Thus some disciples may choose the dead man's eldest son while others may prefer the brother of the deceased.<sup>16</sup>

Usually the shaikh will entrust his son with the children of his own talibes thereby indicating that the talibes are to prefer the son to any other claimant after the shaikh's death. Thus in the first generation it is the eldest son who succeeds in a majority of cases. At present the first generation of shaikhs is rapidly dying off and the second generation, i.e., the grandsons of Bamba and his associates

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<sup>16</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.109 - 110.

are now succeeding to the leadership of the brotherhood. This second generation of succession is determined by seniority beginning with the sons of the founder's eldest son, followed by the sons of the next eldest brother, and so on.<sup>17</sup>

Obviously such a system begins to break down when, in the third generation, the numbers of possible candidates become enormous. The weakness of such a system of succession is already apparent in the fact that the shaikh's landed property is inherited directly from father to son thereby leaving the brothers of the dead shaikh without a share. As a result the disciples tend more and more to follow the eldest son rather than the brother of the dead shaikh despite the fact that the brother is the Khalifa of the family group. A nephew who has inherited a large estate may refuse to recognize his uncle as Khalifa and start a new branch with himself as the head.

Thus within the brotherhood the tendency has been to increase the patrilineal aspect of succession in order to avoid segmentary opposition within the elite group. However competition between sons and brothers of a lineage head is mitigated by the frequent intermarriage of maraboutic families so that a caste-like solidarity may overcome inheritance disputes.<sup>18</sup> As a result, marriages with women from the traditional aristocracy are no longer in vogue while women of lower class origin may become the concubines of a shaikh but they rarely attain the status of a legal wife. Thus, the daughters of marabouts are much sought after

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<sup>17</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.112.

<sup>18</sup> O'Brien, p.117.

as marriage partners of the shaikhs in order that the prestige of a lineage be increased. Of the eleven daughters of Ahmadu Bamba, eight married Murid shaikhs and three married marabouts of other brotherhoods; of the thirteen daughters of Abdurahman Lo, all but two married shaikhs of the Mbacke family; of the nine daughters of Muhammad Bouso, seven married shaikhs. The latter two families are closely connected with the inner circle of the Mbacke family at Touba.<sup>19</sup>

This practice of endogamy has given rise to a sense of corporate identity which stabilizes the hierarchical structure of the brotherhood. The Khalifa-General, Abdou Lahatte Mbacke, a son of Ahmadu Bamba, presides over an imposing religious organization with a tightly coordinated subordinate elite. Directly under the Khalifa are the Khalifas of the major lineages descended from the close associates of Ahmadu Bamba. Each of these lineages has a number of shaikhs who direct groups of talibes who are the rank and file of the order. Out of a total membership of some 400,000 initiates, the constituents of the order can be divided into the following categories:<sup>20</sup>

Marabouts .....	.05 %
Civil Servants .....	1.5
Merchants .....	3.5
Peasants and Artisans .....	94.5

(Figures based on a population estimate made in 1959).

Below the rank of shaikh, there is an indeterminate category of religious functionaries which includes all those who perform a public role such as Imam of a mosque, Qadi, or Muezzin as well as those who indulge in

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<sup>19</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.120.

<sup>20</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.171.

less reputable activities such as the preparation of amulets and the distribution of magic formulas designed to prevent disaster or to insure success in the round of daily living. This rather comprehensive group makes up the class of serins (Wolof: holy man, equals Arabic wali) and includes those descendants of the maraboutic families who have not inherited talibes. If a serin has talibes, he becomes a shaikh but such an event is rare.<sup>21</sup>

While the shaikh's power over his talibes is very nearly absolute, it does happen on rare occasions that disciples will cancel their allegiance to one shaikh to join another. However the disciples generally remain attached to their shaikh despite the latter's lapses from strict Islamic rules of conduct. The shaikh's association with Ahmadu Bamba is sufficient to offset any misgivings on the part of the disciples regarding his probity. An anecdote illustrating the Murid propensity to rationalize lapses on the part of the shaikh is told of a marabout of the Mbacke family. This individual frequently appeared in public in an intoxicated state. His followers however stoutly declared that the shaikh had so much baraka that strong liquor transformed itself into milk when it reached his stomach.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to the spiritual ties between shaikh and talib, there are certain financial and material obligations incumbent upon the murid. These obligations entail labour services and money payments which are placed at the disposal of the shaikh. Co-operative labour was a feature of Wolof society, but under the Muridiyya it has been made part of the religious practice. Although the brotherhood's emphasis on production

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<sup>21</sup> O'Brien, p.107.

<sup>22</sup> O'Brien, p.89.

reveals a certain similarity to the so-called Protestant Ethic, there is a significant difference in the fact that work is meritorious only if it is performed for a shaikh. There is no merit in work for its own sake.

The transformation of the M'Backe family into a dynastic monopoly of the office of Khalifa-General is symbolized by the ceremonial institution of the Magal. The magal is a pilgrimage to the tomb of Bamba in the Great Mosque of Touba. Originally the magal was instituted to commemorate the death of the founder. Later it became the means of collecting funds for the construction of the Great Mosque which is the central shrine of the Muridiyya movement, as well as the symbol of the Mbacke clan's hegemony of the order. For the average member of the brotherhood, the annual visit to Touba is a ready substitute for the expensive and time-consuming pilgrimage to Mecca. Since all the talibes are invited to go to Touba on the 18th of the month of Safar, the numbers of the participants are very large (200,000 in 1967). The presence of government officials and dignitaries from the other brotherhoods highlights the importance of this annual event.<sup>23</sup> In addition there are other magals sponsored by important shaikhs of the order to commemorate important events in the life of Ahmadu Bamba but these do not nearly approach the ceremonial significance of the magal of Touba.

The visible manifestation of Murid power and prestige is the imposing mosque which houses the tomb of Bamba. The central minaret of this vast structure is the highest in Africa (86 metres, almost 300 feet).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Descriptions of the Magal can be found in Behrman, Sy, and O'Brien.

The appearance of this edifice with its five minarets and fourteen domes on the horizon of the flat plain of Baol only serves to accentuate its splendour. After forty years of construction at an estimated cost of £ 1,000,000, the shrine is now substantially complete. Although the Senegalese government has provided financial help, the brunt of the building effort was borne by the largely unremunerated labour of the Murid disciples. Such a monumental achievement is ample proof of the personal devotion and financial generosity of the rank and file. This complicated network of monetary collections and disbursements reinforces the cohesion of the brotherhood and tends to root the authority of the marabouts in the day-to-day transactions which affect the well-being of the members.

The contributions given by the talibes to their shaikhs are divided into four categories. The assaka (Ar. sakat) is an obligatory alms tax, prescribed by Muslim law, which was levied on various kinds of property and distributed to the poor. Among the Murids, this form of payment is minimal and most talibes make occasional small donations to the poor on their own initiative (sadaga). A second type of gift is made to the shaikh at the beginning and end of Ramadan. The two offerings are called respectively unkte and murun kor and are made in the form of small portions of millet.<sup>25</sup> The most important contribution common to all Senegalese brotherhoods is the hadiya (Ar. gift) which is given to the shaikh at the initiation ceremony (njebbel) and thereafter on the occasion of ceremonial visits of the shaikh (ziyara). In the Senegalese context, the sufi practice of ziyara has become elaborated

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<sup>25</sup> O'Brien, p.92.

into the solemn assemblies called magal by the Murids and gamou by the Tijanis.<sup>26</sup>

In 1947, the Khalifa-General of the Muridiyya instituted a form of compulsory hadiya, called the sas, which was to be used for the completion of the Great Mosque of Touba. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the mosque has been completed, the hadiya, is still in force. Needless to say, many Murids have reacted quite strongly to this imposition of religious taxation and some religious leaders refuse to collect it from their followers. Others fear that the funds collected are not used for the purpose stated by the Khalifa-General.

Another payment is the njottuk bop (Wolof: "redemption of the head") which, unlike the sas, is a fixed sum payable by all Murids. This payment of 140 francs a head originated during the lifetime of Ahmadu Bamba in order to finance the mosque of Touba. However it fell into oblivion after the founder's death only to be reinstated in 1947 along with the sas.<sup>27</sup>

In contrast with the Muridiyya, the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya brotherhoods do not have obligatory payments such as the sas and njottuk bop, but rely on voluntary payments made by the faithful. As a result the financial administration of the two brotherhoods lacks the centralized structure of the Muridiyya and depends more or less on the personal initiative of individual shaikhs. However, in recent years the Tijani marabouts have become increasingly involved in the groundnut trade which has given rise to corporate financial ventures in order to regulate and

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<sup>26</sup> The kings of Walo used to receive tribute at a ceremony called gamou. See Monteil, op. cit., p.24.

<sup>27</sup> O'Brien, p.94.

invest the sums involved.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the marabouts have become the dispensers of large sums of money which are used to build up the cooperative enterprises which function under the auspices of the major maraboutic families.

However, not all the income received is re-invested. The religious leaders redistribute part of their wealth to their followers. The old and infirm are regular recipients of food and other necessities. The shaikhs, through their business connections, help their followers to find employment and in times of financial distress, they lend money at interest rates much lower than those offered by the Lebanese traders. Through such activities, the brotherhoods in Senegal have become a form of insurance against mundane disaster as well as guarantors of celestial rewards. As directors of the brotherhoods' agricultural enterprises, the maraboutic families have become a managerial elite. As a result, the practice of endogamy among the leading families not only limits the extension of baraka, but also insures that the control of the commercial ventures remains in the hands of the religious elite.<sup>29</sup>

#### The Dara

The most effective institution utilised by the brotherhoods to develop a sense of community spirit and loyalty in the rural environment is the dara which is a type of religious collective farm. At various periods and in different areas the sufi orders have sponsored small settlements of ascetics who wished to spend some time in scholarly pursuits and meditation. These foundations are known as zawiya or

<sup>28</sup> See Quesnot, op. cit., p.123.

<sup>29</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.120.



or khanqah.<sup>30</sup> The dara is a development of the zawiya and like the latter it originally designated a community engaged in religious education. The pupils and ascetics supported themselves and their shaikh by cultivating nearby fields and tending the flocks belonging to the shaikh. Even though work in the fields occupied a large part of the daily schedule, the purpose of the institution was essentially religious education.

The Muridiyya have developed the dara into an agricultural co-operative under the supervision of a shaikh or his delegate. Although there are some Muridiyya daras which do attempt to give their members training in law, Arabic grammar, and Qur'an recitation, the amount of manual labour done by the pupils is substantially greater than that performed by members of the Qadiriyya or the Tijaniyya daras. This emphasis on communal labour has its roots in traditional patterns of Wolof land exploitation. Prior to the colonial era, land was distributed by the Wolof kings to their subordinate chiefs, the lamans who controlled extensive areas which were inherited from father to son. Sections of this land were in turn given to the free peasants (badolo) to cultivate under a grant called the "right to axe". This system was abrogated by a decree voiding the power of the kings to grant land rights and a second decree which eliminated the title of the lamans to grant land to their peasant clients.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> See Evans-Pritchard, The Sanusi of Cyrenaica for the situation in Libya; I.M. Lewis has described the tariqa settlements in Somaliland where they are known as jama'a; see A Pastoral Democracy, pp.95-100.

<sup>31</sup> Pelissier, op. cit., p.122-147.

On the village level, among both the Wolof and the Serer, the cultivation of village fields was implemented through communal work groups called xamba or kompin which were based on age groups.<sup>32</sup> Thus the dara combines features of the sufi zawiya and the Wolof kompin. O'Brien points out however, that the kompin exists only on an occasional basis whereas the dara members spend many years in the service of their shaikh.<sup>33</sup>

The development of the dara during the years following Bamba's death is the major innovative feature of the Muridiyya movement and its most effective means of territorial expansion. Unlike many co-operative agricultural institutions and work groups which have died out in West Africa the dara system has spread from the Muridiyya to the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya in Senegal.<sup>34</sup>

The individual responsible for the proliferation of the working dara was shaikh Ibra Fall, an early associate of Ahmadu Bamba. Of Tyeddo descent, Ibra Fall seems to fit the role of the organizer of a prophetic movement; an eminence grise who shapes the ideals of the charismatic leader into concrete rules for action.<sup>35</sup> It was Ibra Fall who persuaded many tyeddo to become followers of Bamba by setting himself up as the model talib. According to tradition, the first encounter between Bamba and Fall was a dramatic one. Fall removed his clothes as a sign of humility in the presence of his master and crept on his

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<sup>32</sup> See Ames, op. cit., pp.224-227.

<sup>33</sup> O'Brien, p.165.

<sup>34</sup> C. Meillassoux, Anthropologie économique des Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire, pp.175-185; Meillassoux shows how communal work is dying out among the Gouro.

<sup>35</sup> See P. Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, 2nd ed. London, 1968, pp.xvi-xvii.

knees before Bamba and pronounced the formula of njebbel which has since become part of the ritual of initiation: "I submit myself to you, in this life and the next. I will do everything that you order me. I will abstain from anything you forbid me."<sup>36</sup> Ibra Fall then informed Bamba that he had not come to seek education but to serve a marabout who would be his guide.

The service which the new disciple performed for the marabout was hard physical labour which, in the context, was also service of God. Consequently, formal religious duties were no longer necessary since Ibra Fall's activity constituted a religious act. Before long a group of like-minded disciples joined Ibra Fall and formed the model of the working dara. This group of zealots devoted almost all their time to practical work for Ahmadu Bamba, surrendering to him the results of their labour. Despite a certain amount of opposition to the eccentric behaviour of Ibra Fall, it was apparent that Bamba had fully accepted the new group. Indeed the Bay Fall, as the group came to be called, were closely associated with the vision Bamba had concerning the erection of the Great Mosque of the Muridiyya. Ibra Fall cleared the ground for the shrine at Touba and his followers have custodial prerogatives at the mosque itself.

The growth of the Bay Fall manifests several interesting features indicating the resumption of certain Wolof traditional roles and ranks. Ibra Fall was given the title of jawrin which originally designated a subordinate chief under the Damel. Fall's followers were called jam, "slaves" of the marabout. Thus the members of the working dara had

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<sup>36</sup> O'Brien, p.143.

the same status as the defunct class of tyeddo who had been slaves of the Damel.<sup>37</sup> However, the changed social situation in Senegal rendered the life of the initiate in the dara an arduous experience. The young men who flocked to the new working daras depended entirely on the success of the harvests and the generosity of their shaikh for their livelihood. Due to their penurious state, the initiates were called takder in reference to the belt which they wore to keep their ragged clothing in place.<sup>38</sup> All in all, the dara quickly became a refuge for the landless tyeddo, young men fleeing conscription or forced labour under the French.

The dara also functioned as an institution for the socialization of young adepts. Here again the role of custom is paramount. It appears that the ordinary Wolof work groups were highly competitive and after the French takeover, physical labour replaced the military expeditions which were designed to prove one's valour and manhood. Thus, the ceremony called wango, which formerly preceded a battle, now heralds the beginning of work contests in which the men vie with one another in clearing and planting fields.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, in the colonial period, when warfare and inter-ethnic strife was forbidden, the dara, like its secular counterpart the kompin, provided a means of proving one's physical prowess. Hence the life of the Takder was especially attractive to the tyeddo class who had previously been engaged in military exploits and pillaging raids. The dara served as an introduction to agricultural production, thereby providing the tyeddo with a new livelihood.<sup>40</sup> These eager recruits were the vanguard of the

<sup>37</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.141.

<sup>38</sup> O'Brien, p.165.

<sup>39</sup> Ames, op. cit., p.231.

<sup>40</sup> Pelissier, p.111.

Murid penetration of the interior and the dara system came into force during the rush to the "New Lands" caused by the opening of the rail lines to Kayes in 1923 and to Linguere in Jolof in 1931. During the years 1930-1945, Murid shaikhs built landings along the rail lines to facilitate the shipment of groundnuts in accordance with the French policy of basing the Senegalese economy on groundnut exports. In this way the Murids gained access to the railway and thus they were able to ship their stocks more cheaply than if they had to convey their produce from great distances.

The dara has become the basic groundnut production unit in the Senegalese economy. The daras themselves form groups or clusters on the estates of the shaikhs and each dara in the cluster is directed by the jawrin (Wolof: "deputy") who is appointed by the shaikh. This individual is usually the oldest person in the dara. Of the eleven daras studied by O'Brien only three of the jawrins were married and two of the latter were over forty years of age.<sup>41</sup> Each cluster of daras is supervised by another representative of the shaikh called the borom dara.

The size of the individual daras in O'Brien's sample ranged from five to sixteen members. The largest cluster was that of the Khalifa-General at Touba Bogo which comprised twenty-two daras. The number of daras under a shaikh's control is an indication of his importance in the Murid hierarchy. Hence it is only to be expected that the Mbacke family would control a large number of daras. Of the thirteen leading shaikhs selected by O'Brien, ten belonged to the Mbacke family and two to the Fall family. The family allegiance of the thirteenth, Shaikh

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<sup>41</sup> O'Brien, p.170.

Modou Khabane, was not apparent from his name.<sup>42</sup>

The decision to live in a dara is left to the talib who may or may not enter a dara after his act of submission. When the recruit is very young however, the decision rests with the parents or guardians. From O'Brien's sample, it would seem that more than half of the recruits do not exercise free choice when they enlist in the dara.<sup>43</sup> In this latter case, the parents look upon the dara as a period of schooling during which the child learns the basic elements of his religion as well as the techniques of farming. In addition, the fact that the child will receive food and lodging in return for his labour alleviates the family's financial burden. Finally, the resulting relationship with a shaikh can be a valuable social asset.

Those disciples who enter the dara voluntarily are, of course, older than the preceding group and hence they can perform the more demanding tasks connected with clearing and planting the fields. For this group the educational benefits of the dara are minimal aside from memorizing verses from the Qur'an and the qasa'id (religious poetry) of Ahmadu Bamba.

The material security afforded by the dara is also a factor in recruiting new members from youths who have little prospect of inheriting or buying land. In addition, the communal solidarity and corporate spirit manifested by the dara community also attracts new recruits. Finally, the takder, if they have worked for a long period in the dara, can expect the shaikh to provide them with a bride price, when they decide to leave the dara in order to get married. But even in this case the shaikh usually chooses the takder's wife from among the daughters of one

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<sup>42</sup> O'Brien, p.167.

<sup>43</sup> O'Brien, p.171.

of his talibes.

After leaving the dara, the ex-takder may settle in one of the villages settled by talibes of the shaikh who usually gives him a plot of land. However, most of the ex-takder return to their native villages where they are treated with great respect because of the merit they have gained from working for a shaikh.

The dara is fundamentally an institution which functions as a socializing medium through which the religious and ethical ideals of the brotherhood are imparted to the unmarried youths who make up the group. In order to render the talibes more dependent on the shaikh and his deputy (jawrin), the daras were generally set up in more remote areas isolated from Wolof villages. Consequently the daras became pioneer settlements which opened up vast tracts to subsequent settlement. At the age of about twenty-five the monastic life of the dara was given up by the talib who then married and began to form the nucleus of a Muridiyya village with his confreres in the vicinity of the dara. Thus, many of the villages in the Ferlo region of central Senegal are outgrowths of the dara system.

The working schedule of the dara is a rigorous one, beginning at five in the morning and ending in the evening with Qur'an readings.<sup>44</sup> In only one of the daras studied by O'Brien was time allotted for a holiday period. In the other daras, the takder were granted permission to leave the dara only to attend the funeral of a close relative. Otherwise, the takder may see his relatives only if they visit the shaikh. If the dara is geographically remote, even these occasional visits may be

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<sup>44</sup> For a description of the work day in the dara, see Tidiane Sy, op. cit., passim, especially pp.141-144.

impossible. There are cases of talibes who had worked in the dara for ten or fifteen years without once being allowed to visit their relatives. Despite this rigorous regimen the dara still renews itself from the sons and brothers of ex-takder.<sup>45</sup>

Under the watchful eyes of the jawrin and the borom dara, the takder are taught respect for the authority of the shaikh and of those dignitaries whomake up the entourage of the Khalifa-General. The shaikhs also see to it that strong bonds between potentially troublesome members of the dara are discouraged since such bonds might lead to the group's challenging the policy or authority of the shaikh. To avoid such a possibility the shaikhs try to preserve a fairly wide age distribution within each individual dara.<sup>46</sup>

The ex-takder frequently serve as intermediaries between the majority of peasant Murids and the shaikhs. The very fact that a talib has endured the arduous service of the dara, sets him on a pedestal above his fellows who have not devoted themselves so single-mindedly to their shaikh. These latter are termed takko by the ex-takder. This was the Wolof term used for a wife who had not yet come to live with her husband.<sup>47</sup> As a result of his association with the shaikh, the takder tend to be regarded as religious experts and local representatives of the shaikh's authority. However, even despite his local prestige, the takder does not attain to the rank of shaikh since the title of shaikh depends on descent.

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<sup>45</sup> O'Brien, p.182-184.

<sup>46</sup> Sy, op. cit., p.174-175.

<sup>47</sup> O'Brien, p.181.



Inevitably the arduous conditions and isolation which characterized the early daras have been softened somewhat. As more and more daras are transformed into villages, the possibility of initiating new daras has diminished due to the lack of available land. The government has also set aside large areas of forest preserves which puts further limits to Murid expansion.

An added impetus to find new land springs from the nature of Wolof agricultural practice. The Wolof are a mobile population which has expanded territorially in a south-easterly direction at the expense of the neighbouring Serer and Fulani. According to Pelissier, the transformation of the majority of Wolof into landed peasants is relatively recent.<sup>48</sup> As a result, the Wolof have not learned to utilise fertilizers or crop rotation to increase yields and maintain the fertility of the soil. Crop rotation is discouraged by the marabouts since the major agricultural effort is aimed at cash income from groundnuts. Organic fertilizers are seldom used since the Wolof do not, as a rule, possess livestock. Hence after a few years, the fields become exhausted and the cultivators are forced to find new lands.<sup>49</sup>

The Serer, on the other hand, have more highly developed farming techniques which permit them to raise a diversity of crops as well as livestock. For this reason the Serer are more sedentary than the Wolof and have been more resistant to brotherhood influence.<sup>50</sup>

The eastward expansion of the Wolof has had serious consequences

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<sup>48</sup> Pelissier, op. cit., pp.177-178.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.178.

<sup>50</sup> J. Fouquet, "La traite des arachides dans le pays de Kaolack et ses conséquences économiques, sociales et juridiques," Etudes Sénégalaises, No.8, Centre I.F.A.N. 1958, p.31.

for the semi-nomadic Fulani pastoralists of Ferlo. In 1937, at Touba Fall, fifty people were injured in a battle between Murids and Fulani over land rights. When the case was brought to the courts, the Fulani won but their victory was ephemeral. The Murids returned and uprooted the crops planted by the Fulani and replaced them with groundnuts. In the face of such determination the Fulani moved from the area. In any event, the vagueness of Fulani land rights rendered their plight more difficult especially since the Murids considered Fulani grazing areas as virgin land.<sup>51</sup>

Gradually the shaikhs assumed a right of eminent domain over areas where Murid settlers built daras and villages in the former Fulani districts. Despite the fact that the Lamans' right to distribute and allocate land had been abolished by administrative decree in 1906, nothing prevented the shaikhs from exercising an equivalent right vis a vis their disciples in the newly-cleared areas. Eventually this right of the marabouts was abolished by another decree in 1964, but this latter decree has remained inoperative.<sup>52</sup> Alongside this right of eminent domain, there are proprietary rights belonging to the shaikhs which give them complete control over certain acreages within the village areas. These are the so-called Wednesday fields.

The Wednesday field was an acreage cultivated for the marabout by adult talibes while they received religious instruction. Since family obligations prevented these individuals from entering the dara, they recompensed the marabout by working one or two days in a field set aside for the purpose. Nowadays the Wednesday field is merely a fallow area

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<sup>51</sup> O'Brien, p.198.

<sup>52</sup> O'Brien, p.201.

set aside for the shaikh by his talibes. When this field is cultivated all the produce goes to the shaikh. This method of making an offering to the shaikh has become general among the brotherhoods and Wednesday fields are cultivated for Tijani marabouts as well. The supervision of these fields is entrusted to the senior talib in the village who is given the title of jawrin. The jawrin's task is to recruit labour for sowing, cultivating and harvesting, all of which may consume only four or five days in the year depending on the zeal and efficiency of the workers. This form of voluntary gift does not require any initial outlay on the part of the marabouts since the implements and seed are provided by the villagers. All the marabout does is collect the proceeds from the jawrin after the harvest.

The size of these fields varies considerably with most fields ranging between five and ten acres. The total number of such fields is difficult to estimate since the shaikhs are sometimes unaware of the number themselves. The Khalifa-General had a Wednesday field in almost every Murid village in Senegal as well as several in the Ivory Coast and in Mali which were farmed by Wolof migrants.<sup>53</sup>

It is important to note that most of these land rights are customary and are not confirmed by civil law. A law passed in 1964 did make provision for certain "developed" lands to be registered as private property. As a result, many shaikhs have applied for registration and if the government accepts their claims, it could conceivably alter the religious relationship between shaikh and talib into one between landlord and client with all the legal coercion such a relationship implies.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> O'Brien, p.212.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p.213.

From this survey of the various types of land exploitation practiced by the Muridiyya brotherhood and, to a lesser extent by their Tijaniyya counterparts, it appears that the marabouts have come to exercise the function traditionally belonging to the Lamans. The talibes working on the dara have combined certain features of the Damel-Tyeddo relationship with aspects of the Wolof communal work groups called kompin. The process in which the daras have been transformed into village settlements has enabled the Murids to anchor themselves in the new territories at the expense of the Fulani. To the south, the Serer ethnic group has until relatively recently resisted the impact of the brotherhoods but even they are rapidly being infiltrated by Wolof settlers. Indeed when a Serer becomes a Murid he automatically gives up his Serer identity and becomes Wolof.<sup>55</sup> Thus the vitality and dynamism of the Wolof is aided by the religious network of brotherhood loyalties. The daras and Wednesday fields serve to retain the links between the Talibes and the shaikhs. The Jawrins become the go-betweens in the complex social and financial transactions which define the roles of shaikhs and disciples.

#### The Urban Da'ira

The third pillar of the Murid ideological system is the urban association of talibes called da'ira (Arabic: "agency"). This institution is not original with the Muridiyya since it is a development of the communal chant sessions associated with the dhikr ritual common to all Muslim brotherhoods.<sup>56</sup> The growth and influence of the da'iras is

<sup>55</sup> See M. Klein, Islam and Imperialism in Senegal, p.viii; O'Brien, p.242.

<sup>56</sup> See Behrman, op. cit., p.197.

mainly a post-war phenomenon following from the migration of many rural farmers to Dakar and other urban centres. The analysis of the da'ira must take account of the development of Senegalese society in the years preceding independence. Hence the following chapter will consider the reaction of the brotherhoods to the conditions brought about urban migration during the period 1945-1965.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FROM RURAL PLANTATIONS TO URBAN FEDERATIONS: THE BROTHERHOODS AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN SENEGAL 1945-1965

At the Murid Magal in 1963, Leopold Senghor, President of Senegal, outlined his view of the relationship between the Muridiyya brotherhood and the government of Senegal:

Although a certain infantile leftism tries to present the religious chiefs as 'counterrevolutionaries'..... it pleases me to give justice to these lies.

Again what is Socialism if not essentially the economic-social system which give primality and priority to work? Who has done this better than Ahmad Bamba and his successors. . . . People talk to me of rational organised work. And you (the Khalifa-General) have always, in this sense, supported the effort of the Party and the Government.<sup>1</sup>

The close co-operation between Senghor's regime and the brotherhood is, of course, the sequel to the policy fostered by the French in the years following Bamba's death. Nevertheless, the altered social and political situation of Senegal has brought about corresponding changes in the authority structure of the brotherhoods as a whole. The rapid growth of metropolitan centres such as Dakar has challenged the rural-agricultural orientation of the shaikhs. As a result, the brotherhoods not only have had to adapt themselves to the new breed of indigenous political leaders, but they also had to develop means whereby the religious elite could maintain contact with the increasing numbers of talibes who began flocking to the cities of Dakar, St. Louis, Kaolakh, and Thies.

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1 Cited in Behrman, Muslim Brotherhoods and Politics in Senegal, p. 118.

This urban migration has been accelerated by the progressive degradation of the soil in the groundnut zone due to inefficient methods of horticulture. Government attempts to regulate land tenure and preserve forested areas have prevented further expansion to the arid regions of eastern Senegal. The Loi sur le domaine national of 1964 has officially abolished the proprietary rights of those who do not actually work the land they claim.<sup>2</sup> In 1965, a decree setting up government sponsored rural councils further threatened the hegemony of the rural marabouts.<sup>3</sup> It was evident that if the marabouts wished to preserve their role they would have to take into consideration the fact of urbanisation. The great wave of agrarian colonisation had petered out.

In the urban context the formation of local associations called da'ira (in Wolof: dahira) has enabled the brotherhoods to adapt themselves to the new order. The da'ira is, in effect, the urban counterpart of the rural dara and, like the dara, it has developed from the communal prayer meetings and reading sessions associated with the sufi tariqas. Like many of the ethnic and religious societies that have sprung up throughout Africa, the da'ira serves as a mutual aid association for urban members of the brotherhoods. The popularity of these associations has made the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya da'iras a prominent feature of the urban landscape in Senegal.

Apart from maintaining links between the tariqa leaders and their disciples, the da'iras are also a major source of financial aid.

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2 O'Brien, p. 212.

3 Sy, p.260.

Indeed their primary function is to provide funds for the economic and welfare activities of the religious leaders. The major means of collecting funds is through community chant sessions which often last into the small hours of the morning.

In general the da'iras of the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya are loosely organised groups whose main purpose is to edify and inspire their members through chants which praise God and extoll the virtues of the saints of the two orders. However when the Muridiyya began to organize da'iras for the urban talibes, they gave these associations strong economic orientations. The Muridiyya emphasis on service to the shaikh shaped the structure of the da'ira by retaining its association with the shaikhs and ultimately with the Khalifa-General. Gradually this hierarchic organization permeated the Tijaniyya da'iras so that today the federation of da'iras under the control of the Tijani shaikh Ibrahim Niass rivals the Muridiyya da'iras in prestige and political influence.<sup>4</sup>

The Muridiyya da'ira associations did not develop until urban migration began to increase after the Second World War. Before that time migration to the cities was only temporary, depending on the demand for seasonal workers called "navetanes". After 1945, Murid quarters sprang up in the principle towns of Senegal and by the early 1950's there were over 25,000 Murids in Dakar, and 7,000 in Thies.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately no reliable statistical study of the urban membership is available. Censuses were made at Thies in 1953 and at

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4 See Froelich, Les Musulmans d'Afrique Noire, pp. 237-238.

5 O'Brien, p. 242.



Dakar in 1955 which divided the brotherhood membership into categories of age, sex, occupation, educational level, and ethnic origin. Although this survey is over fifteen years old, it does provide some indication of the urban composition of the tariqas.

As far as age distribution is concerned, no significant variation distinguished the three brotherhoods (Qadiriyya, Tijaniyya, and Muridiyya). On the other hand, the proportion of women to men was higher for the Muridiyya than for the other two brotherhoods. This difference corresponds to the higher ratio of women among the urban Wolof in comparison with other ethnic groups. Since the Muridiyya are almost all Wolof whereas the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya comprise other ethnic groups, it follows that the Muridiyya would have a higher ratio of women to men.<sup>6</sup> The Muridiyya also had a higher rate of polygamy than the other brotherhoods. Usually a high rate of polygamy is associated with prestige and wealth but in the Murid case, the opposite seems to be true. The urban Murids are often members of n'iyenyo or artisan castes and occupy the poorer quarters of Thies and Dakar. In general the Murids are considered socially inferior to the Qadiri and Tijani adepts. On the other hand, the higher polygamy rate of

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6 O'Brien gives the following figures: Percentage of members of brotherhoods with more than one wife in Dakar:

Murids.....	20%
Tijanis.....	18%
Qadiris.....	13%
Number of wives per married man in Thies: (a sample of 633)	
Murids.....	1.67
Tijanis.....	1.44
Qadiris.....	1.27

O'Brien, op. cit., p. 241

the Murids is to be explained by the geographical proximity of some Murid villages to the urban centres and also the fact that the major population centres are either in or near Wolof territory. Hence Murid urbanization patterns is directly connected with the Wolof predominance in the cities.<sup>7</sup>

From statistical surveys, it appears that Murid membership is overwhelmingly Wolof. As a result, Murid migration reinforces the pattern of Wolof predominance in urban areas.<sup>8</sup> Other ethnic groups such as the Tokolor must travel long distances to obtain Tokolor wives in order to maintain ethnic identity. The Serer, while living close to the urban centres of Dakar and Kaolakh, have not been forced to migrate because of their greater agricultural proficiency which enables them to maintain their rural way of life. The Wolof, on the other hand, have tended to grow only groundnuts, thereby obliging themselves to import foodstuffs such as millet and rice. The Wolof lack of permanent attachment to the land, which has been previously mentioned, has rendered the Wolof more ready to engage in other occupations such as trade and commerce.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the almost feudal nature of Wolof farming techniques, which is a corollary of their tariga adherence, has retarded the formation of small independent property holdings despite the efforts of the government to curtail the shaikhs monopoly over land tenure.

7 For details on the ethnic composition of the Brotherhoods in Dakar and Thies see O'Brien p. 243.

8 Pelissier, Les Paysans du Senegal, op. cit., pp 95-96.

9 See Abdoulaye Bara Diop, "La Culture Wolof", Notes Africaines, no. 121 (I.F.A.N., 1969) pp. 1-7.

Thus Wolof predominance in the urban centres is a by-product of a migratory process resulting from the exhaustion of available land due to the faulty methods of agriculture currently encouraged by the shaikhs. This process can ultimately be traced to the particular features of the tariqa organisation among the Wolof which encourages maximum returns from groundnut production for the benefit of the religious leaders while failing to take adequate steps to maintain soil fertility. This short-sighted policy has turned large fertile tracts into desert wastes unfit for cultivation.<sup>10</sup>

In the two censuses made in Dakar and Thies the ethnic composition of the Muridiyya is seen to be mainly Wolof: 87% of the Murids in Dakar were Wolof while 93% of those in Thies were Wolof.<sup>11</sup> The fact that Wolof is the language of trade and communication between the different linguistic groups means that Wolof is expanding at the expense of other languages. The breakdown of ethnic groups in terms of tariqa affiliation reveals that a majority of Wolof are Tijani thus making Wolof the language of many of the Tijani religious meetings. As a result many of the Tokolor who are almost all Tijani have had to use Wolof when they move to the urban areas. Thus both urban Tijaniyya and Muridiyya are agents of Wolofization. This tendency is especially pronounced among the Muridiyya. "If you become a Murid, you become Wolof" is the general consensus of urban talibes.<sup>12</sup> Today Wolof is the

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10 Pelissier, p. 350

11 O'Brien, p. 243

12 O'Brien, p. 242

language of many of the urban da'iras and of religious expression in general.

Since the shaikhs of the Murids and, to a lesser degree, the shaikhs of the Tijaniyya, live on their estates in the rural districts, new forms of organization were needed to maintain links with the swelling ranks of urban migrants. At first the shaikhs appointed jawrins to act as their delegates in the towns and to report on the activities of the talibes. The jawrins were entrusted with the tasks of preserving religious loyalty and encouraging regular financial contributions to the shaikhs. However the jawrins soon ran into difficulties due to the suspicions of the urban disciples who believed that their contributions were in fact lining the jawrins' pockets instead of being remitted to the shaikhs. Many talibes refused to deal with the jawrins and preferred instead to make their offerings to the shaikh in person.

Although the traditional donations, hadiyya, sas, and njottuk hop are still maintained, two new modes of payment have been instituted in the urban context. These contributions are derived from the "Wednesday Field" payment, the allarba, and from the collections made by the da'ira associations. The "Wednesday Field" has already been mentioned as watered-down substitute for the dara service. In the towns its function has been formalised even further. Each Wednesday or Sunday, an official nominated by the shaikh, or elected by the talibes collects an unstipulated sum as a substitute for work in the "Wednesday Field". Alternatively the shaikh may possess land near the town which serves as a "Wednesday Field" and

is cultivated by urban talibes in their free time. Thus the Khalifa-General of the Muridiyya has two fields outside Dakar, several others near Diourbel, and others as far away as Bathurst.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the time factor has limited the success of these developments since urban employment severely restricts the opportunities of the talibes to work in the "Wednesday Fields".

The da'ira, on the other hand, is a much more successful organization and resembles the urban associations found elsewhere in West Africa and which have been studied by Banton, Little, and Meillassoux.<sup>14</sup> Essentially the da'ira is an adult equivalent of the teaching dara. Whereas the dara is chiefly concerned with the rudiments of Islamic learning, the da'ira members interest themselves in a broad spectrum of social and religious issues. For this reason, the da'ira is not only an institution which reinforces loyalty to the religious elite but also powerful political force in the urban scene.

The beginnings of Murid da'ira activity can be traced back to the Diwan Mouridina Fi Amdahi Khaayril Moursalina (Association of Murids for the Praises of the Best of the Prophets) founded by Cheikh Nbacke in 1942. The aim of the association was to improve knowledge of the Qur'an, to organize religious singing, and to provide assistance for those in need. This group comprised several thousand members in a number of towns and became a valuable support for

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13 O'Brien, p. 249

14 See M. Banton, West African City: A Study of Tribal Life in Freetown (London 1957); K. Little, Urbanisation: A Study of Voluntary Associations in Social Change (Cambridge, 1970); C. Meillassoux, Urbanisation of an African Community: Voluntary Associations in Bamako (Seattle, 1968).

Cheikh Mbacke's political adventures. In 1945, after the death of his father, Mamadu Mustara who was Khalifa-General of the Muridiyya, Cheikh Mbacke's succession to the office of Khalifa-General was foiled by the French who suspected Mbacke's association with Pan-Arab and anti-colonial movements. As a result, Mamadu Mustafa was succeeded by his brother Falilou Mbacke whose accession was in accord with Wolof custom.<sup>15</sup>

Because of Cheikh Mbacke's personal ambitions, his diwan had an overt political cast. After 1945, opposition from both the government and other Murid leaders reduced the activity of the association. However other urban associations did have this political aspect and confined themselves to weekly sessions of religious singing and to collecting funds for their respective patron-shaikh. Gouma Lo Seck instituted a da'ira for the Khalifa-General in 1946 in order to sing the qasa'id (religious poems) of Ahmadu Bamba each Sunday after which a collection was taken. Similarly, a very active da'ira was founded at Kaolakh by Ale Samba Gueye at the Khalifa-General's instigation, to raise funds for the Great Mosque of Touba. In 1951, its collections for the mosque exceeded £ 1,000. This da'ira also began the practice of bringing the bodies of deceased members to Touba for burial.<sup>16</sup>

Gradually the urban da'ira replaced the "Wednesday Field" and members were exempted from work on the mosque of Touba if they sent shipments of building materials. This development underlines the

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<sup>15</sup> See Behrman, op. cit., pp.46-47.

<sup>16</sup> O'Brien, p.252.

general centralising and streamlining of the da'ira structure. Since there are relatively few talibes of a given shaikh in any one urban concentration, the associations have affiliated themselves to the Khalifa-General at Touba to simplify the process of financial and other remittances. Thus the da'ira are organized on geographic lines with residents of the same quarter or ward forming a local association with direct ties to the Khalifa-General even though the individuals in the group are talibes of various shaikhs in different parts of the country. As a result of this centralising tendency, the response of many Murid shaikhs to the da'ira has been somewhat less than enthusiastic seeing that their urban disciples are progressively transferring their loyalty to the Khalifa-General. Only the disciples of Cheikh Mbacke display a reluctance to join the Khalifa-General's da'iras.

Despite this centralisation, there is a certain degree of autonomy within the local da'ira. Since many urban talibes distrust the jawris sent from Touba, the Khalifa has permitted local groups to elect their own officials who are, in fact, usually active supporters of the Khalifa. A president is chosen to direct the affairs of the new group and it is his task to prepare a list of officials to expedite the affairs of the da'ira. Like many similar societies, the roster of officials is quite long with a number of imposing titles. While the electoral process of choosing these officials seems democratic, usually only those who are literate or closely connected with the central administration of the brotherhood are chosen. Once elected, these officials seem to have

long tenure despite annual elections.<sup>17</sup>

Most da'iras meet once a week for organized singing. These meetings are usually held in the evening and sometimes give rise to a considerable volume of noise which may attract prospective converts or arouse the ire of rival groups from the other brotherhoods. One such occasion when rioting broke out was the meeting sponsored by shaikh Tidiane Sy who is an opponent of the Tijani Khalifa Abdul Aziz Sy. The Khalifa had the government issue an order forbidding Tidiane Sy from holding the meeting. Tidiane Sy broke the government ban and in the melee which broke out, he was arrested and imprisoned. This event publicly revealed the extent of intra-brotherhood rivalry among the Tijaniyya elite.<sup>18</sup>

The content of these meetings is quite varied. In the Murid case it appears that only the qasa'id of Ahmadu Bamba are sung. Behrman lists several meetings which presented different types of programmes in addition to the qasa'id. One Murid da'ira featured a film on the Magal to Touba, while a Qadiri da'ira sponsored lectures on religious subjects.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it appears that the content of the da'ira meetings is more flexible than the formulas used at the Friday dhikr.

The da'iras are the basic cell unit of the tarikas in the urban environment where they function as mutual aid societies in cases of domestic or financial distress. The da'iras also provide

17 O'Brien, p. 254.

18 See Ibrahim Marone, "Le Tidjanisme au Senegal", Documents C.H.E.A.M., no. 3955 (1964) pp. 10-12; Behrman, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

19 Behrman, p. 198.



job opportunities for newcomers and for the unemployed. In cases of illness or death, the da'ira provides funds and sends a delegation to console the sick or bereaved. The expenses of marriages, funerals, and circumcision feasts are also defrayed by the da'ira associations.

The solidarities generated by the da'ira, have until recently, been based on geographical proximity in a specific quarter of a city or town. However, there are indications that in certain areas the da'ira is gradually assuming the form of a guild of specialised craftsmen or an association of workers similar in function to a labour union. A factory in Dakar has a da'ira of Muridiyya employees. There are also da'iras for goldsmiths, fishermen, and tailors and in Kaolakh there is a da'ira whose members are recruited entirely from blind people.<sup>20</sup> Thus it appears that this institution tends to recruit members in terms of occupation. At the same time this specialising tendency introduces a degree of autonomy which weakens the bonds tying the da'ira to the Khalifa-General. In the same way the rivalry between the locally elected association president and the jawrin appointed by the Khalifa emphasizes the friction between the urban talibes and the rural central hierarchy of the Murid brotherhood.

The amount of money collected by these organizations depends on the economic status of the members with women and youths paying less than the members of a craft association. The average contribution per individual ranges from \$2 to \$4 annually.<sup>21</sup> The yearly total

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20 O'Brien, p. 254

21 O'Brien, p. 256.

from each association is usually presented publicly to the Khalifa at the great Magal of Touba. Supplementary donations of labour and produce also fill out the da'ira's annual remittance. Thus a da'ira may collectively cultivate a field or help in the groundnut harvest. Some associations also provide specific services for the Magal: St. Louis da'iras make prayer mats for the pilgrims; those of Dakar send food and bedding; those of Touba build grandstands and clean the streets for the festival. Finally, some da'iras provide building materials for the Great Mosque and for the residences belonging to the Khalifa-General.

Since most of the urban da'iras are affiliated with the Khalifa-General in Touba, the other Murid leaders have lost control of their urban talibes. The proliferation of these organizations has meant an increase in the influence of the Khalifa enabling him to sponsor a re-organization of the local associations in order to achieve greater co-ordination. In 1959 the da'iras of Dakar formed a federation called L'Union Federale des Dahiratou Falilou Mbacke which represented thirty-one member associations.<sup>22</sup> Eventually many of the da'iras sponsored by other marabouts joined the Khalifa's federation. These included two Qadiriyya da'iras which indicates the close relationship which still exists between the two brotherhoods. Only two groups have managed to remain outside the Khalifa's federation; the group headed by Cheikh Mbacke, the rival of Falilou Mbacke, and the group belonging to the Bay Fall which represents the old tyedde class within the Muridiyya.<sup>23</sup>

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22 Sy, p. 193; O'Brien, p. 257

23 O'Brien, p. 151.

This process of centralisation has not been entirely without difficulty. The fact that the elected leaders of the local associations enjoy a degree of independence has tended to create intense rivalries between the more politically oriented officials. Many of the rank and file distrust the aims of the association presidents and accusations of financial mismanagement are frequent. As a result, new competitive alliances are formed on the da'ira level in order to gain control of the federation. Just as the religious leadership of the brotherhood became a prerogative of the Mbacke clan through endogamy, so now new clan factions are forming to compete for power within the da'ira sub-structure. But whereas the prerogatives of the Mbacke family are based on the baraka transmitted to his descendants by Ahmadu Bamba, no such spiritual or religious justification is used to buttress the claims of the da'ira presidents. The electoral process has created new criteria for leadership which is achieved primarily in terms of political ability. Hence the "liminal" aspect of the role of da'ira president is almost non-existent. In this sense the informal organization has been gradually transformed into a formal interest group similar in function to a labour union or political reform society. Thus Muridiyya becomes more "secular" in the urban environment.

Paradoxically, the increasing centralisation of the Muridiyya brotherhood has brought about a situation which threatens the unity of the group. In this context the ritual display of the unity at the Great Magal to Touba and the constant appeal to the baraka of Ahmadu Bamba still perform a solidary function. But it is a moot

point whether the evocative power of the Magal will continue to exercise a restraining effect on the conflicts which threaten the cohesion of the order as a whole. Both O'Brien and Behrman are inclined to view the power struggle of the urban brothers as the beginning of the decline of the power of the marabouts. At least one author, however, takes the opposite view. I.L. Markovitz considers the urban associations as preludes to the marabouts' bid for formal political power. By using the da'iras as political pressure groups, the marabouts will gain a foothold in the government itself.<sup>24</sup>

The effect of the urban migration has had a considerable effect on the general relationship of the central government with the religious orders. In the pre-war period, the French favoured the brotherhoods because of the colonial interest in encouraging groundnut production. At the same time, the colonial government intervened when internal squabbles within the brotherhoods threatened to disrupt the harmonious alliance of French officials and marabouts. Thus the French engineered the elections of Mamadou Mustafa and Falilou Mbacke to the office of Khalifa-General of the Murids. They also insured the succession of Bekkai Kunta, to the leadership of the Qadiriyya in Senegal.

After the war the winds of change increased political activity on the popular level. Lamine Gueye had cultivated the friendship of the leading Tijanis such as Abdul Aziz Sy, Ibrahim Niass, Mansur Sy,

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24 I.L. Markovitz, "Traditional Social Structure, the Islamic Brotherhoods, and Political Development in Senegal"; Journal of Modern African Studies, vol. 8, no. 1 (1970), 73-96.

and Abubacar Sy, the Khalifa-General of the Tijaniyya in Senegal. Gueye, as head of the S.F.I.O. (Section Francaise de l'Internationale Ouvriere) seemed to be the unquestioned leader of Senegal and had the support of both the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya marabouts. However the introduction of electoral reforms began to cloud Gueye's political future. Despite numerous efforts to ingratiate himself with the marabouts through sponsored pilgrimages to Mecca, loans for mosques, and agricultural subsidies, Gueye never recovered from Leopold Senghor's break with the Socialists. The reasons for Senghor's success lay primarily in his policy of enlisting the support of the marabouts who could deliver large numbers of votes to the splinter group headed by him. Before long Senghor's party, the B.D.S. (Bloc Democratique Senegalais) began to overtake the S.F.I.O. This process of political polarization was intimately connected with the power struggles within the brotherhoods.<sup>25</sup>

Lamine Gueye's friendship with Cheikh Mbacke and the brothers of Abubacar Sy alienated both the Khalifa of the Tijaniyya and the Khalifa of the Muridiyya. For Cheikh Mbacke had opposed the election of Falilou Mbacke as head of the Murids while Abdul Aziz Sy and Mansur Sy intrigued against their brother Abubacar who was Khalifa of the Tijanis. Gueye's alliance with these disaffected claimants to the leadership of their respective orders coupled with the socialist ideology of the S.F.I.O. boded ill for the economic privileges of the brotherhood elites. The situation was further

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<sup>25</sup> See Behrman p. 73.

complicated by the extension of the franchise which raised the number of eligible voters from 200,000 in 1946 to 655,000 in 1951. In effect this broadening of the electorate meant that a large part of the voters were rural talibes under the influence of the marabouts. Hence any politician who wished to secure a national constituency had to consider the interests of the marabouts in order to win rural backing. In this way the marabouts became willing intermediaries between politicians and rural voters.

When Senghor broke with Gueye his opposition movement had only minority support in the Territorial Assembly of Senegal in 1948. The fact that he was a Serer Christian also limited his appeal to the Wolof Muslim majority. To overcome his initial handicap, Senghor enlisted the aid of the Tijani leader of the Tokolor, Seydou Nourou Tall and Falilou Mbacke, the newly elected Khalifa of the Muridiyya. Senghor promised to help Falilou in his quarrel with Cheikh Mbacke and, if elected, he promised government subsidies for the completion of the mosque of Touba. The socialists attempted to counteract the efforts of the B.D.S. but Gueye's association with Cheikh Mbacke alienated most of the rank and file Murids. Senghor won over the Tijanis through a blunder committed by some socialist partisans.<sup>26</sup>

In 1951, a group of socialist supporters were on their way to hold a rally in Tivouane, the headquarters of the Wolof Tijanis and the seat of the Sy family. As the S.F.I.O. members drove to the

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26 See Beyries, "Les confréries religieuses Musulmanes", Documents C.H.E.A.M. no. 1325, (1958).

rally site, their vehicles were stoned by the Tijanis. In reprisal, the S.F.I.O. men jumped from their trucks and launched an attack on the compound of Abubacar Sy, the Khalifa. As a result, the S.F.I.O. was discredited in the eyes of pious Tijanis and lost the elections of that year in Tivouane. The son of the Khalifa, Tidiano Sy (not to be confused with the author bearing the same name) had already displayed a penchant for political activity and began to campaign for Senghor in Tijani areas. Thus, through his alliance with Seydou Nourou Tall and with Abubacar Sy, Senghor won over the bulk of Tokolor and Wolof Tijanis to the banner of the B.D.S.

Mention has already been made of the tension created in the upper echelons of the Muridiyya ranks because of the conflict over the succession to the office of Khalifa-General. Wolof custom prescribes that succession to the rank of family head is from eldest brother to next eldest brother. When all male siblings have died, the succession passes to the eldest son of the eldest brother. However, this custom was broken when the French urged the succession of Ahmadu Bamba's son instead of his brother who was politically suspect. When Bamba's son, Mamadou Mustafa, died, it was only natural that Mamadou's son, Cheikh Mbacke, deemed himself eligible to succeed his father. However when, in fact, Mamadou's brother, Falilou was elected through French pressure, Cheikh Mbacke refused to acknowledge him as Khalifa and allied himself with the S.F.I.O. whose leader, Lamine Gueye, had supported Cheikh Mbacke's claim. In this way the two political parties came to be identified with the two factions in the Muridiyya order. B.D.S. supported the Khalifa

while S.F.I.O. supported Cheikh Mbacke.<sup>27</sup>

Lamine Gueye's support came mainly from the urban districts but with the electoral reforms already mentioned the majority of the electorate was to be found in the rural areas. Soon the defeats suffered by the S.F.I.O. brought home the implications of Senghor's "politics of the Bush". In 1952 the B.D.S. gained 41 seats in the Territorial Assembly with 223,156 votes, while the S.F.I.O. ran a poor second with 9 seats and 95,202 votes.<sup>28</sup> A prime factor in Senghor's triumph was his promise, made just before election day, to secure a higher price for groundnuts. In addition the conduct of Cheikh Mbacke's disciples publicly embarrassed the S.F.I.O. In March, 1972, an assault launched by the dissident leader's talibes on the residence of the Khalifa at Touba required military assistance in order to be quelled. Falilou condemned not only the action of the talibes but also Cheikh Mbacke's association with the S.F.I.O. Later, after the election, Falilou convened the leading Murid shaiikhs and had them ratify a document which determined that succession was to be collateral. This document, which was signed by the leaders of the order, effectively excluded Cheikh Mbacke from ever becoming Khalifa since he was older than the youngest of the Khalifa's brothers.<sup>29</sup>

Falilou's sympathy for Senghor drove Gueye to express his backing for Cheikh Mbacke more openly. But as the 1952 elections

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27 See O'Brien, p. 268 ff.

28 See O'Brien, p. 268

29 Ibid., p. 130



were ample proof that Gueye's association with the dissident elements in the Murid hierarchy had a disastrous effect on the S.F.I.O., the socialist leader attempted to attack Senghor on religious grounds. In an article written by a leading figure in the S.F.I.O., Senghor was accused of attempting to give the Catholic minority more power by cleverly exploiting Muslim weakness. After bitter exchanges in the B.D.S. paper Condition humaine, party stalwarts managed to unearth Gueye's marriage certificate which recorded his marriage with a Catholic. This discovery tarnished Gueye's image as a Muslim champion. In any case the religious issue soon faded.<sup>30</sup>

In the long run, Senghor's party triumphed because of his alliance with the tariqa leaders who commanded the greatest number of followers. By winning the support of Abubacar Sy, Seydou Nourou Tall, and Falilou Mbacke, Senghor not only won the allegiance of their talibes but also broadened the ethnic appeal of the B.D.S. Assured of Serer support, Senghor won over to his side the Tokolor by allying himself with Nourou Tall, and the Wolof by supporting Abubacar Sy and Falilou Mbacke. Lamine Gueye, on the other hand, had as allies mainly Wolof dissident marabouts such as Cheikh Mbacke, Abdul Aziz Sy, and Ibrahim Niass. Although very influential, these latter figures could not offset the authority of Senghor's partisans who embraced the three dominant ethnic groups in Senegal, the Wolof, the Tokolor, and the Serer.

By astute manipulation, Senghor managed to whittle away Gueye's urban followers especially in Dakar. Senghor's chief assistant in

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30 See Behrman, p. 87

the party had been Abbas Cueye who came from the Lebou tribe near  
 31 Dakar. But since the Lebou are only a small minority in the Dakar  
 region, Senghor decided to woo the Tokolor who had been migrating to  
 Dakar in large numbers. By promising to appoint a Tokolor as deputy  
 leader of the party, Senghor won over the Tokolor union in Dakar,  
 the U.G.O.V.F. When Mamadou Dia, a Tokolor, became deputy leader of  
 the B.D.S. the alliance between the B.D.S. and the Tokolor was firmly  
 ratified.<sup>32</sup>

In effect Senghor had made the B.D.S. a national party with no  
 one ethnic group appearing to dominate its policies. For this reason  
 the B.D.S. was able to absorb or defeat the small splinter parties  
 which represented local ethnic interests.<sup>33</sup> Once the B.D.S. had a  
 monopoly of patronage and political power, those marabouts who  
 opposed it began to realise the necessity of laying aside their  
 differences and coming to terms with the changed situation.  
 Eventually even the Socialists merged with the B.D.S. and together  
 the two groups formed the Union Progressiste Senegalaise (U.P.S.).  
 Finally when the left-wing F.R.A. (Parti de Regroupement Africain)

31 See G. Balandier and P. Mercier, Particularisme et Evolution: les Pêcheurs Lebou du Sénégal (I.F.A.N., 1952), p. 110 ff. The Lebou speak Wolof but maintain their own ethnic identity. They are largely engaged in fishing and in recent years a syncretic religious movement has won a number of converts from among them. The movement was started when Limamou Laye received the gift of prophesy from a jinn which appeared to him in the shape of a large fish. The sect is called Layenne after the name of the prophet.

32 For the Tokolor in Dakar, see Abdoulaye Diop, Société toucouleur et migration: enquête sur la migration toucouleur à Dakar (Dakar, I.F.A.N., 1965, pp. 225-227.

33 M. Happe, "L'Islam au Sénégal dans le contexte politique", Doc. C.H.E.A.M. no. 4146, (January 1967), p. 10.

merged with the U.P.S. in 1966, Senegal became, in effect, a one-party state. Opposition is now expressed through factions rather than through formal political parties. These intra-party factions are the means through which the marabouts can preserve their influence or, if necessary, jeopardise the careers of their opponents.

Two incidents will illustrate the political ramifications of disputes within a brotherhood or between two brotherhoods. Both incidents are concerned with the erection and management of two major cathedral mosques.

The first case concerns the mosque at Touba which had been the cause of friction among Murids on several previous occasions. Whoever controlled the mosque of Touba would be able to exercise considerable influence during the great Magal and on other festive occasions. Although Falilou Mbacke had been elected Khalifa, his control over the shrine town of Touba was limited since Cheikh Mbacke as heir to his father's property, possessed the plans for the construction of the mosque as well as the lease for the land on which the edifice was being constructed. In 1947 Cheikh Mbacke announced that building would recommence and launched an appeal for funds to finish the structure. These proposals were an obvious embarrassment to Falilou who entered into discussions with Senghor in order to gain possession of the plans for the mosque and to thwart Cheikh Mbacke's fund-raising schemes. To solve the conflict, a committee of important members of the brotherhood was set up and given charge of the mosque. This ploy enabled Falilou to prevent Cheikh Mbacke from gaining control of the mosque area. In order to avoid the enmity of the other Murid

leaders Cheikh Mbacke eventually made over the plans to Falliou. By 1957 after the rapprochement between Senghor and Lamine Gueye, Cheikh Mbacke made an official visit to Falliou and the friction between the two began to disappear.<sup>34</sup>

The second incident involved the appointment of an Imam for the Mosque of Dakar. Because of its size and its location in the capital, the Dakar Mosque symbolized the strength and prestige of Islam in Senegal. As a consequence whoever held the office of Imam was in a position to exercise a great deal of influence within the Muslim community of the capital.

Although the mosque was to be under Tijani control since the Tijaniyya was the dominant tariga in Senegal, it was also to be a symbol of unity for all Muslims. Therefore the cost of construction was met by all major religious leaders and the Murids contributed large sums for the enterprise. Senghor's deputy, Mamadou Dia, a Tokolor Tijani, proposed that the mosque should be the largest in Senegal and should have an institute of Muslim studies thereby making it the centre of higher Islamic learning in the country. This proposal was greeted with some reluctance by Falliou Mbacke who saw in the new mosque a rival of the great mosque of Touba. However, a much more controversial issue was the choice of Imam.

Since 1941, the Imam of Dakar had been Al Hajj Amadou Lamine Diene, a disciple of Abubacar Sy, the Khalifa-General of the Tijaniyya. When Abubacar Sy died in 1957, he was succeeded by his

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34 For the Touba Mosque dispute see O'Brien, pp. 129-130.

brother Abdul Aziz. The election of Abdul Aziz was contested by Tidiane Sy, son of Abubacar and a partisan of Senghor. Shaikh Tidiane was a bitter opponent of his uncle Abdul Aziz who had been closely associated with Lamine Gueye. In the ensuing squabble, Amadou Lamine Diene sided with Tidiane Sy and as a result he alienated the faction of Abdul Aziz. For this reason Abdul Aziz used the occasion of the new mosque to depose Diene from his post as Imam of Dakar. The supporters of Abdul Aziz alleged that Diene was not well educated in Arabic or Qur'anic science and therefore unfit to preside over the new centre of Islamic studies. The storm that broke over the appointment involved all the major Tijani and Murid interests and highlighted the tensions within the ranks of the brotherhood elite. Thus, a study of the Dakar Mosque dispute reveals the inter-ethnic and generational rivalries reflected by the different factions within the tariqas.<sup>35</sup>

The selection of a candidate from among the Tijanis had to satisfy three requirements: (1) The candidate must be of sufficient standing in the brotherhood in order to win the backing of important religious leaders (2) he should be Wolof, (3) he should be acceptable to the civil authority. The second condition ruled out any Tokolor candidate. Nevertheless the leader of the Tokolor Tijanis, Seydou Nourou Tall attempted to bypass this difficulty by persuading Abdul Aziz to claim the office of Imam. Since Abdul Aziz normally resided in Tivouane where his duties as Khalifa monopolised

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35 J. Paden has shown how disputes concerning succession to high office in Kano, Northern Nigeria are expressed chiefly in terms of adherence to a brotherhood or to a particular faction in a brotherhood. See Paden, "The Influence of Religious Elites on Political Culture and Community Integration in Kano, Nigeria", op. cit., p. 424.

most of his time, his title of Imam would be more or less honorary. Hence a deputy Imam was needed and for this office Seydou Nourou proposed his own nephew Mourtada Tall.

In effect, the appointment of Mourtada Tall would increase Tekolor influence within the ranks of the Tijaniyya in Dakar. Criticism of the Imam would be kept at a minimum since Abdul Aziz would hold the title without exercising the role. Seydou Nourou's plan resulted in the unanimous election of Abdul Aziz at a meeting of the Association of Imams of Cap Vert. This association was controlled by Nourou Tall and did not represent all the Imams of the area. At this juncture Falilou Mbacke backed by Tidiane Sy and Ibrahim Niass, the Tijani leader of Kaolakh, decided to oppose Abdul Aziz Sy. Tidiane Sy, of course wished to embarrass his uncle Abdul Aziz while Ibrahim Niass had long refused to acknowledge the Sy family's claim to spiritual sovereignty of all Senegalese Tijanis.<sup>36</sup>

As a result of this powerful coalition, pressure was put on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Doudou Thiam, who happened to be a Murid. At length Senghor sided with Falilou and Lamine Diene was acknowledged as Imam. This decision was a blow to the Tekolor party and at the same time it increased the prestige of the Murid Khalifa. As a result, Nourou Tall, who had originally been a strong supporter of the B.D.S. and its successor the U.P.S., became alienated for a

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<sup>36</sup> On Niass's activity in Nigeria see Paden, op. cit., pp.259-265; on the significance of Niass's nyenyo, (blacksmith caste) origin see Froelich, Les Musulmans de l'Afrique Noire, op. cit., p.238.

time from the government.<sup>37</sup> Senghor could afford to risk a break with Nourou Tall since the solid backing of the Wolof Tijanis and the Murids would prevent Nourou from forming a coalition of religious leaders to oppose the government. Formal political opposition was difficult especially after the merger of the socialists with the B.D.S. in 1958. The only opposition parties remaining were left-wing groups whose platform usually contained condemnations of tribalism and religious superstition. Such political alignments would be unacceptable to Nourou Tall with his religious background. Hence it was no surprise when the Tokolor leader swallowed his pride and eventually rejoined Senghor's retinue. So ended the Dakar Mosque dispute.

The wrangling which occurred during these two incidents illustrates the circumspection the administration needs in order to avoid backing the losing side in a religious dispute. For this reason, it has been Senghor's policy to support the Murid Tijani Khalifas in most disputes since the influence of the Khalifas is a determining factor in the electoral process. An example of this pragmatic attitude is the rupture which pitted Senghor against his erstwhile supporter Tidiane Sy.

Unlike most prominent marabouts Tidiane Sy had actively campaigned for political office. Although he was one of the first major public figures to back Senghor's break with Lamine Gueye, his devotion to the U.P.S. cooled when Senghor refused to support him in

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37 Behrman, op. cit., p. 79

his bid for the Califfate after the death of his father Abubacar Sy. Indeed the Administration covertly supported the accession of Abdul Aziz instead of the mercurial Tidiane Sy. Since Abdul Aziz was not interested in politics and was more concerned with religious matters at Tivouane, his accession was more acceptable to the administration.

An open break with the U.P.S. occurred when Tidiane together with Ibrahim Niass and Ibrahim N'Daw, a Kaolakh trader, formed the Parti de Solidarité Sénégalaise. Ibrahim Niass did not stand for any office, but Tidiane Sy ran against Senghor at Thies while N'Daw ran against Valdiodio N'Diaye in Kaolakh. In this contest U.P.S. won 85% of the votes. After this defeat, Tidiane Sy was arrested on charges of provoking a riot at the home of a sister of Abdul Aziz. This was an unprecedented step for the government to take but after the intervention of Abdul Aziz, the troublesome Tidiane was released in 1960. The failure of Tidiane's effort soon lead to the dissolution of the Parti de Solidarité and both he and Niass eventually made a public declaration of support for the U.P.S.. Subsequently Tidiane was made ambassador to Egypt where his financial ineptitude embroiled him in a huge deficit. He was recalled in 1962 and immediately joined forces with Mamadou Dia, Senghor's deposed Prime Minister. By 1965, after a second period of detention, he was once again in the good graces of Senghor.<sup>38</sup>

In order to achieve a measure of stability in government policy the U.P.S. must be assured that the powerful marabouts will co-operate

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38 M. Happe, "L'Islam au Sénégal dans le contexte politique", op. cit., p. 15.



with party objectives. For this reason Senghor and other government dignitaries make it a point to attend the great religious festivals of the brotherhoods. At the Murid Magal or the Tijani Gamou Senghor frequently makes a statement expressing the government's appreciation of the work of the marabouts and their disciples in building the Senegalese economy. The fact that Senghor is a Christian enables him to play a neutral role in his dealings with the different brotherhood leaders. This respectful solicitude for the interests of the religious elites has twice helped Senghor ride out two crises which threatened his political career. In 1960 when the Mali Federation broke up as a result of differences between Senghor and Modibo Keita, most of the marabouts sided with the U.P.S. Even Ibrahim Niass, who had been friendly with Keita came out in favour of the Senghor faction.<sup>39</sup> Two years later, when Mamadou Dia attempted to oust Senghor, Falilou Mbacke persuaded the Tijani and Murid leaders to throw their weight behind the beleaguered President.<sup>40</sup>

Because of the rivalry between the Tijaniyya and the Muridiyya, as well as factional disputes within each brotherhood, the religious elites of Senegal have not been able to form a united front with which to exert pressure on the government. This state of affairs is due in large measure to the intense economic competition between the maraboutic families which adds fuel to the abstract theological

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39 Behrman, op. cit., p. 93.

40 See W. Foltz, From French West Africa to the Mali Federation, (New Haven 1965), pp. 49 and 177.

and ritual differences which mark off Murids from Tijanis. As a result, a number of young Tijani marabouts have begun to voice misgivings about the "worldly" interests of their confreres. These reform-minded leaders argue that the brotherhoods should concern themselves with social welfare and religious education rather than with economic and political issues in order to preserve the agricultural interests of the great family monopolies.<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless the religious leaders have made some attempts to organize an association of marabouts which would represent the interests of all the Muslim brotherhoods. In 1965 when Senghor's party had overcome all major opposition, some of the marabouts viewed the Paris-oriented government officials as a potentially hostile group. Seydou Nourou Tall urged the formation of a Council of Marabouts to speak on behalf of the whole Muslim community whenever the situation might require concerted action. In November, 1958, an association called the Council of Religious Chiefs met to propose a series of measures designed to safeguard the interests of the Muslims of Senegal. Among its expressed aims were: (1) the submission of the new Senegalese Constitution to the marabouts in order to assure its compatibility with the principles of Islam; (2) the right of the Council to arbitrate differences between Muslim leaders and the Administration; (3) to defend the interests of Muslims in the civil service and in the judiciary.<sup>42</sup>

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41 See Tidiane Sy, *op. cit.*, pp. 297-298

42 See Behrman, p. 122.

The roster of officials was impressive. The Tijani President was Nourou Tall while the Murid President was Falilou Mbacke. The two Secretaries-General were Ibrahim Niass for the Tijanis and Cheikh Mbacke for the Murids. Abdul Aziz Sy was to be Treasurer while other posts were given to Tidiane Sy and to Sidi Lamine Kunta, the Qadiri leader. Obviously such an organization would be a formidable pressure group and would seriously reduce the authority of the Government in matters which affected Muslims. However, the Council never really got off the ground and soon became a paper organization. From the beginning Falilou Mbacke suspected the motives of Nourou Tall and Ibrahim Niass in setting up the group and his support of the Council was, at best, lukewarm. The fact the Seydou Nourou Tall represented Tokolor interests, while Niass represented Tijani resistance to the Sy family may also have been factors in the alienation of the Khalifa-General of the Murids and the Khalifa-General of the Tijanis from the Council. Thus, the failure of the Council can be seen as a result of the disinterest shown by the leaders of the leading Wolof religious groups.

In recent years there have been strong indications that the Wolof Tijanis and the Murids are becoming more closely allied. At the solemn festivals of the Magal and the Gamou, Tijani and Murid leaders exchange gifts and assist at one another's prayer rituals.<sup>43</sup> Shaikh Tidiane Sy had already sided with the Murids in the affair of the Dakar Mosque. In return, Falilou Mbacke sent his own talibes

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43 See Sy, op. cit., pp 299-300. This mixing occurs despite Tijaniyya strictures forbidding the cult of non-Tijani saints.

to help Tidiane Sy in harvesting his groundnut crop. Finally, in 1965, Abdul Aziz Sy was accompanied on the pilgrimage to Mecca by Cheikh Mbacke. On the other hand, Ibrahim Niass has very little to do with the Murids and criticises them publicly. This pugnacious attitude is connected with Niass's background and religious orientation. Unlike the other religious leaders, Niass is a member of the blacksmith caste and hence, has no torobe ancestry. Secondly, even though he is Wolof, the majority of Niass's disciples are found outside Senegal in Cameroun and Nigeria. Thus, Niass's interests are more international than those of the other Wolof leaders.<sup>44</sup>

By cultivating the friendship of Malilou Mbacke and Abdul Aziz Sy, Senghor has been able to win considerable support from the Wolof who constitute the largest ethnic group in Senegal. Hence, when Mamadou Dia was removed as Prime Minister and later arrested in 1962, Senghor could rely on the Tijani and Murid Khalifas to keep their followers loyal to the Government during the crisis. Even though Mamadou Dia was a Tokolor and a member of the Tijaniyya, Senghor could risk alienating the Tokolor since they were far less numerous than the combined forces of the Wolof and the Serer. Interestingly enough, Nourou Tall and Ibrahim Niass declared their support for Senghor only after Dia had been arrested and the worst part of the crisis had passed.

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44 Niass has added a ritual sign which distinguishes his group from other Tijanis. Apparently he has ordered his disciples to cross their arms at the Friday prayer. This has caused considerable tension to break out in Sokoto and Kano in Nigeria. See Paden, pp. 276, 413, 417. On June 18, 1965 the Sardauna of Sokoto convened the Council of Mallams in Kaduna to condemn the practice.

Thus Senghor overcame the initial handicap of being a Christian and a Serer through his association with the major Wolof religious leaders. This strategy was an implicit recognition of the influence of the Sy and Mbacke families over the network of daras and da'iras throughout Senegal. The leading shaikhs of the brotherhoods were cast in the role of political brokers capable of delivering to the government large numbers of votes drawn from the mass of their followers. This ability to mobilise large sectors of the population is a result both of the charismatic appeal of the founders of the brotherhoods and of the economic monopoly which their descendants have erected over the years.

In the 1950's, when the political parties were jockeying for power, the Shaikhs realised that the sale of votes was much more rewarding than the sale of groundnuts. After independence the new government was ridden with factions and lacked the coercive resources of the French administration. It was only natural that the rival factions turned to the brotherhoods in order to achieve electoral supremacy. In this way the factions in the formal political system tried to exploit the factions within the brotherhood ranks. Thus, the dispute between Cheikh Mbacke and Falilou Mbacke is, in a sense, the mirror image of the rivalry between Senghor and Lamine Gueye. But as Senghor consolidated his power and eventually made Senegal a one party state, the brotherhoods began to co-operate more closely with one another. The Murids, once considered a pariah movement, now make pilgrimages to Mecca and interest in the life and teaching of the prophet Muhammad is beginning to affect the cult of Ahmadu Bamba.

The rapprochement between brotherhoods is an indication of the Wolof ascendancy in the urban centres as well as in the rural communes. Murids and Tijanis of the Tivouane obedience speak the same language and have similar spiritual goals. The "Wolofization" of Islam has meant a "Wolofization" of much of the Senegalese population. Inevitably, however, the growing power of the central government and the consequent loss of electoral competition pose new problems for the shaikhs. With the disappearance of the structural circumstances which gave the brotherhoods their initial impetus, the spiritual leaders must adapt themselves to a new situation. Whether the shaikhs will be able to perpetuate their role as spiritual leaders remains problematic.

## CHAPTER SIX

### POLITICS, RELIGION AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE:

#### THE TIJANIYYA IN NORTHERN NIGERIA (1950-1966)

H.G. Smith in his study, Government in Zazzau, analysed the changes in the structure of the political system of the Emirate of Zaria which took place as a consequence of Fulani and British rule. He summarizes his findings by postulating what he calls "The Law of Structural Drift". According to Smith, a governmental system changes internally when its operation through time highlights structural weaknesses.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in order to survive, the system must constantly adapt itself to changing circumstances and at the same time preserve its hegemony.

This chapter will attempt to show how the analysis of the growth of the Tijaniyya in Northern Nigeria illustrates the general validity of Smith's observation. Thus, the Tijaniyya Brotherhood will be examined in order to determine how the order was involved in the re-distribution of power within the overarching framework of an Islamic social system. Patterns of cleavage and dissent within the Northern Regional Government will be considered as reflections and symptoms of the conflicts and shifts within an essentially hierarchic and traditionally oriented society. Since this chapter is concerned with the Tijaniyya movement in Northern Nigeria, the political and religious influences from the Southern Regions will be only marginally considered.

To assess the role of the Tijaniyya, two important features of political developments in the North have to be taken into account:

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<sup>1</sup> H.G. Smith, Government in Zazzau, p.321.

first, the failure of the N.E.P.U. (Northern Elements Progressive Union) to emerge as an effective opposition to the N.P.C. (Northern Peoples Congress) with the result that the North became a one-party region and Secondly, the role of the Native Authority administrative system within the North which continued to exercise power both under the Indirect Rule system set up by Lord Lugard, and, after the departure of the British, under the federal system of independent Nigeria. These two factors meant that (1) there was no effective way to express dissent within an effective opposition party and, (2) within the apparently monolithic unity of the North there were local and regional forces which were potential obstacles to the centralizing tendencies of the Northern Government under the aegis of the Sardauna of Sokoto. It is within this structural situation that the role of the Tijaniyya is particularly significant.

1950 has been chosen as the point of departure since both N.E.P.U. and N.P.C. took shape in that year. The Northern Elements Progressive Union declared itself as a political party in Kano on August 8, 1950. Its avowed aim was to emancipate the common people (talakawa) from the domination of the privileged few (sarakuna) through reform of the autocratic institutions of the Northern Region. Later that same year, in Jos, the Northern People's Congress was inaugurated as a cultural organization, the object of which was to afford northerners the opportunity of meeting and discussing social problems. The leaders of this group ordered the members to break with N.E.P.U.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> C.S. Whitaker, The Politics of Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria, 1946-1966, (Princeton, 1970), p.357; B. Dudley, Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria, (London, 1968) pp.78-81.



In 1951, the "Macpherson Constitution" altered the political situation by prescribing elections and setting up ministerial governments and regions empowered to make laws subject to the approval of the British Governor. Consequently, political parties, hitherto frowned on by traditional rulers in the North, became officially acceptable. At the same time, the northern leaders saw the necessity of closing ranks in order to thwart the designs of the politically more aggressive leaders of the South. At the Ibadan Constitutional Conference of 1950, the Emirs of Gwandu, Zaria, Katsina, and Abuja joined with the commoner Malam Abubakar Tafewa Balewa (future Prime Minister of the Federation of Nigeria) in the defense of northern sectional interests. Chief among their several demands was parity of representation for the Northern Region in the federal legislature. The granting of their demands, despite southern opposition, was paramount to giving a high degree of political autonomy for the North which, in effect, meant a continuation of the Native Authority administrative structure.<sup>3</sup>

A noticeable feature in the emergence of political parties during the period immediately before independence was the prominent part played by teachers and educators. Since a high proportion of the educated minority in the North were teachers (e.g., both the Sardauna and Abubakar Balewa), it was only natural that political movements would be guided by this particular group.<sup>4</sup> In addition, at this incipient stage of party politics, the differences between N.E.P.U. and N.P.C. adherents

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<sup>3</sup> See Dudley, op. cit., pp.23 and 80.

<sup>4</sup> See M. Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent in Hausaland", op. cit., p.355.

were not clearly elaborated. Only after N.E.P.U. began to attack the Native Authority system did traditional leaders rally to the N.P.C. As a consequence, from 1952 to 1958, the party program of N.P.C. began to align itself more and more in terms of traditional values such as established hierarchy, obedience to authority, the unity of Islam, and similar customary patterns of behaviour.<sup>5</sup>

Eventually, the Native Authority structure became the main buttress of the political effectiveness of the N.P.C., a situation manifested in the party platform in which was stated the aim of "Local Government reform within a progressive emirate system based on tradition and custom."<sup>6</sup> The party was committed to work within the basic emirate structure which had been preserved by the British policy of Indirect Rule. In 1952, the Sultan of Sokoto agreed to become the patron of the party while the Sardauna of Sokoto, Ahmadu Bello, became its President-General.<sup>7</sup>

At first sight, it would seem that the N.P.C. progressively assimilated itself to the political and administrative structure established by the Fulani conquest of the Hausa kingdoms. The Sardauna often appealed to the ideology of the jihad to justify policy and in his life style he attempted to assume the role of religious reformer as well as political leader. In line with this ambiguous religio-political policy, the Sardauna championed the claims of the Sokoto dynasty as the rightful

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<sup>5</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p.362; R. Levine, Dreams and Deeds, (Chicago, 1966), p.90 and passim.

<sup>6</sup> Dudley, op. cit., p.152.

<sup>7</sup> Dudley, op. cit., p.83.

rulers of the North. As a consequence, the N.P.C. became, at one and the same time, the vehicle for political centralization and a potential threat to the local powers of the emirs who often bridled under the restrictions imposed upon them by the Sultan of Sokoto. Thus, the religious ideology of the  Jihad  waged by Uthman dan Fodio early in the nineteenth century and the sanction of Islamic unity underlay much of the N.P.C. propaganda. Indeed the N.P.C. was regarded in the South as a "Political expression for an existing system of administration dyed in religion and innate traditions." <sup>8</sup>

Political commentators on the Northern scene have pointed out that constitutional and political developments in Northern Nigeria were at variance with the development of nationalist parties elsewhere in West Africa.<sup>9</sup> Most nationalist parties manifested programs and tendencies which would have been anathema to the N.P.C. Thus, the populist aims of the  Bloc Democratique Sénégalais  relied essentially on rural support and was forced to ally itself with traditional Muslim leaders in order to attain its objectives.<sup>10</sup> N.P.C., on the contrary, based its program on the urban-based emirate system.

This difference in approach is usually explained in terms of the underlying socio-economic conditions as well as the legal and constitutional autonomy of the North set down in the 1954 Constitution. A second factor is the N.P.C.'s alignment with the emirate Native

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.116, citing the Daily Times (Lagos, 14 Dec. 1963).

<sup>9</sup> See Sklar, Richard, Nigerian Political Parties (Princeton, 1963).

<sup>10</sup> See I. Wallerstein, "West African Politics", in Party Systems and Voter Alignments, eds. Lipset and Rokkan, 1967.

Authority structure. This resulted in a regional organization based on local authority similar to the structure set up by dan Fodio and administered by his son, Muhammad Bello.<sup>11</sup> Hence, the N.P.C. functioned as a nationally organized unit only at election times. The central secretariat exercised very little control over the locally elected party leadership. Conversely, these local bodies took little active part in the formulation of the broad policies of the party so long as the Native Authority structure was kept intact. But if, as Dudley maintains, the degree of centralization in any political party can be expressed as a function of two variables, viz., (1) the extent to which the mass organs of the party actively participate in the formulation of the party program and (2) the extent of the responsibility of the leadership to the mass organization, it follows that the N.P.C. is a centralized organization. In this analysis Dudley disagrees with Sklar and Whitaker who maintain that N.P.C. is uncentralized and diffuse.<sup>12</sup>

Within the predominantly Islamic structural situation, the appeal to religious symbolism and sentiment resulted in enhanced prestige and political power for the Sardauna who emerged as the leading political figure by far in the North. However, the Sardauna's role as political leader was conditioned and circumscribed by certain historical and religious factors which were part and parcel of the Northern Nigeria's cultural heritage. Because of his background and ancestry, the Sardauna symbolized the historic role of the Sokoto dynasty in the formation of the cultural and political climate of the North. In

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<sup>11</sup> See M. Last, The Sokoto Caliphate.

<sup>12</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p.365.

addition, the Sokoto dynastic claims were closely associated with the Qadiriyya order since Uthman dan Fodio had been prominent in that brotherhood.<sup>13</sup> In this context, the traditional rivalry between the Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya brotherhoods takes on an added significance.

The rise of al-Hajji Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, illustrates both the structural continuity of the political system of the North (hierarchical emirates) and the changes which took place in that structure as a result of the Sardauna's role as head of the N.P.C. Thus, we have a case of Smith's stable context together with political activity which generates internal change. On the one hand, the political system tends to greater centralization under a one-party system basing its claims on a religious ideology (dan Fodio's  Jihad ), while on the other hand, local political and religious sentiment based on a certain degree of autonomy for the emirates finds little outlet for expression in terms of party politics. Consequently, dissent in an Islamic idiom had to be expressed in such a way that the aims and aspirations of a number of social and economic groupings could be articulated without disrupting the social order. Because the N.E.P.U. conflicted with a number of traditional Islamic beliefs, it failed to marshal a significant opposition to threaten the hegemony of the Sardauna and the N.P.C. It remained for the Tijaniyya Brotherhood to crystallize this opposition in an acceptable idiom during the formative period 1950 - 1966. It was precisely during this period that the

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<sup>13</sup> On Qadiriyya-Tijaniyya rivalry, see Last, The Sokoto Caliphate, op. cit., pp.215-219; also Abun Nasr, op. cit., pp.175-177; A. Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, op. cit., pp.150-152.

Tijaniyya spread rapidly throughout the North and penetrated the Hausa emigrant trading communities as far apart as Ghana and Senegal.<sup>14</sup> This rapid growth of the Tijaniyya is an indication of the shifting social and economic conditions in West African Muslim populations.

Northern Nigeria underwent considerable economic and political changes during the period 1950-1966, but at the same time, the politicians of the North publicly proclaimed their acceptance of the traditional administrative apparatus of the Fulani emirates. Previous studies of the patterns of leadership in the North have shown that high office was a corollary to status which in turn was largely determined by birth and wealth.<sup>15</sup> Whitaker has amply demonstrated the extent to which the relatives of emirs, district heads, alkalis, and Native Authority officials filled the seats of the Northern House of Assembly.<sup>16</sup> The Premier of the Northern Region was chosen because of his family connections and status while his cabinet was considered the "social register" of the North.

The Northern Prime Minister, Ahmadu Bello, was a great-grandson of Sultan Bello, the son of Shehu Uthman dan Fodio. On his mother's side he was related to the Kano dynasty. In 1938, he failed to succeed to the Sultanate of Sokoto, losing out to his first cousin, Abubakar. In 1943, he was brought before the Sultan's court and sentenced to one year's

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<sup>14</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.424. Paden interprets this increase in membership of the Tijaniyya as a shift from legalistic definitions of community to sufistic definitions of the same. This has entailed a shift of loyalty from traditional authority to charismatic authority.

<sup>15</sup> See S.J. Hogben and A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, The Emirates of Northern Nigeria, (Oxford, 1966); R. Miven, How Nigeria is Governed (London, 1950).

<sup>16</sup> See Whitaker, op. cit., for tables of statistics, pp.318-324.

imprisonment for misappropriation of jangali (cattle tax).<sup>17</sup> He at once appealed to the Nigerian Supreme Court and was acquitted. Thus, early in his career, Ahmadu Bello had worsted the leader of the Muslim community of Sokoto, who was nominally the spiritual head of the faithful in all the North, with the exception of Bornu.

Despite his difficulties with the Sultan, Bello continued to defend the traditional system and made no attempt to hide his desire to eventually become Sultan.<sup>18</sup> In 1954, upon assuming the leadership of the N.P.C., he built about himself a mystique of office which Dudley likens to Weber's conception of charisma. In public statements the Sardauna was referred to as ". . . our divine leader (who) is in a way a reincarnation of Shehu Othman dan Fodio." On another occasion he was called a forerunner of the Mahdi.<sup>19</sup> To cap off this symbolic equation with Islamic heroes, he inserted in his autobiography a genealogy tracing his ancestry back to the prophet Muhammad.<sup>20</sup>

The Sardauna's political statements and speeches often referred to the glories of the Fulani Empire and the religious sanction attached to his role as Premier. The image of a religious leader was sharpened by his annual pilgrimage to Mecca in the period 1961 - 1965. In the tradition of a champion of Islam he devoted himself to founding new mosques, to convening conferences of Islamic scholars and sponsoring a number of religious publications concerned with Muslim apologetic. The

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<sup>17</sup> Bello, My Life, p.58.

<sup>18</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p.348.

<sup>19</sup> Dudley, op. cit., p.134.

<sup>20</sup> My Life, p.239.

most striking illustration of the Sardauna's religious conception of his office was the series of conversion tours which he undertook in the non-Muslim regions of the North.<sup>21</sup>

In the early 1960's the office of Premier took on the appearance of a grand emirship. Indeed, the Sardauna was widely referred to as Sarkin Arewa (Emir of the North). But despite this appeal to traditional values and religious aspirations, the Sardauna had to work within a parliamentary framework. The fact that he was, at one and the same time, subordinate to the Sultan of Sokoto in the religious sphere, and secular leader of the North as Premier, rendered his policies suspect in the eyes of certain emirs and Native Authority officials. These latter viewed his program as an attempt to reduce their own local privileges in order to form a unified governmental system with a single centralized authority structure. Thus the emirs' support of the N.P.C. had two results: first, it safeguarded the traditional political system of the North against incursions from the South. But secondly, while achieving this end, it also enhanced the Sardauna's position as paramount leader thereby diminishing the power and prestige of the more powerful and ambitious emirs.

Below the level of the emirates, the Sardauna's policy envisioned the continuance of recruitment for local Native Authority offices from the aristocratic sarakuna class and its clients. Thus local government officials would remain appointees of the emirs. But on the wider federal level, at least during national elections, the party had to transcend

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<sup>21</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p.349.



local emirate politics in order to win support from talakawa (commoners) the majority of whom were habe peasants.<sup>22</sup> It was precisely on this level that the opposition N.E.P.U. threatened the N.P.C. N.E.P.U. campaigned with a program of reform appealing mainly to talakawa and habe elements who were prevented from attaining high office in the traditional system supported by the Sardauna and the N.P.C.

While advertising itself as a reforming populist party, the N.E.P.U. was constrained to appeal to Islamic principles in its program since to do otherwise would be self-defeating in an area where loyalty to Islam was a presupposition of the social order. But its position as a radical party attacking the functioning social and political order based on hereditary right and patronage prevented it from producing immediate results for its adherents. Since social advancement was determined by traditional norms and since the N.E.P.U. leaders broke with the traditional system, there was no way for them to gain power in the system short of winning an absolute majority. Despite regional gains, N.E.P.U. did not have access to patronage resources jealously guarded by the N.P.C. Hence, the opposition gradually lost their initial gains made in the early and middle 1950's with the result that in 1961 and 1964 the regional and federal elections saw N.P.C. candidates returned in every emirate constituency.<sup>23</sup> Even though the N.E.P.U. appealed to habe resentment of Fulani rule, it failed in its main objectives,

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<sup>22</sup> See Dudley, op. cit., p.137. The term habe (s. kado) was used by the Fulani conquerors to describe the native inhabitants of Hausaland. The term is contemptuous and also means "stupid, backward". See Abraham, Dictionary of the Hausa Language (London, 1962).

<sup>23</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p.377.

since the peasants concluded that the risks of voting for N.E.P.U., incurring possible reprisals from the Fulani overlords, were not commensurate with possible gains.

By 1964 Northern Nigeria was a one-party political unit. Dissent expressed through party allegiance, in this case allegiance to the N.E.P.U. had been overcome and N.E.P.U. exercised only a peripheral role on the local level. Yet the actual situation was far from the harmonious and monolithic consensus which voting uniformity might lead one to suspect. Clearly there was dissent not only in the so-called "Middle Belt" of the Northern Region where non-Muslims were a substantial proportion of the population, but also in the powerful emirates of Kano, Zaria, Gwandu, and Katsina.<sup>24</sup>

Events reached a peak in Kano in 1963, when the Emir of Kano, Muhammadu al-Sanusi was deposed by the Sardauna. Relations between the Sardauna and the Emir had been strained for some years and at length the Emir was forced to resign following a report of a sole Commission of Enquiry in Kano Native Authority financial matters. The events leading up to this confrontation were closely connected with the activity of the Tijaniyya order in Nigeria, and in particular with the Khalifa of Kaolack, Ibrahim Niass.

Kano is the most populous of the emirates and the emir is ranked as one of the "Big Three" together with the Sultan of Sokoto and the Shehu of Bornu. Kano had for some years been at odds with the claims of the Sultan of Sokoto who theoretically is the emir's superior and,

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<sup>24</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.417.

as such, receives an annual tribute payment. Last gives evidence that the friction between Kano and Sokoto goes back to the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>25</sup> But the religious and ethnic ties between the two alleviated the tension which periodically broke out on the occasion of the death of the Emir of Kano. However a new factor was added to the disagreement between Kano and Sokoto when the Tijani leader Ibrahim Niass initiated the Emir of Kano, Abdullahi Bayero, into the Tijaniyya Brotherhood in 1937 during a pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>26</sup> Later Niass went to Kano and initiated members of the Emir's family including his son and heir Al-Sanusi. This event had considerable bearing on the later political development of Northern Nigeria.

The dynasty which ruled the former Sokoto Empire was descended from torobe missionaries and teachers who overthrew the Hausa states early in the nineteenth century. Most of these torobe were affiliated with the Qadiriyya Brotherhood which is still the affiliation of Sokoto itself. Indeed the Sokoto dynasty are called kadirawa or toronkawa since they originally came from Futa Toro in Senegal. Thus a link was established between Fulani hegemony over the Hausa and affiliation to the Qadiriyya. But since the Fulani conquerors regarded their Hausa subjects as inferiors, they did not encourage them to seek affiliation with the tariqa. Hence membership in the Qadiriyya symbolized Fulani particularism and ethnic superiority over the Hausa who were regarded as lax Muslims. In addition public ritual activity was discouraged by

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<sup>25</sup> Last, The Sokoto Caliphate, op. cit., pp.134-136.

<sup>26</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.259; Sharwood Smith states that Niass and the Emir met after the war sometime between 1948 and 1952. B. Sharwood-Smith But Always as Friends (London, 1969), pp.328-329.

the Fulani since such activity might lead the Hausa to express their dissatisfaction with Fulani privilege.<sup>27</sup>

During the nineteenth century, the Tijaniyya Brotherhood began to penetrate Hausaland and this process was speeded up after the French conquest of the Tijani states in West Africa. Thus, many torobe who belonged to the Tijaniyya fled to Sokoto. Paden states that these refugees were regarded by British colonial officials as a sub-group of the Fulani. Hence when these officials use the term "Tijani", they are, in fact, referring to an ethnic group of refugees from French territory. These individuals initiated high-ranking members of the sarakuna class into the order and in this way the Emirs of Katsina and Zaria became Tijanis.<sup>28</sup>

However, a second wave of Tijani activity began in the late 1930's and mushroomed after the war. This wave of religious activity was more egalitarian and trans-ethnic in its proselytization since it comprised both Fulani and Hausa elements. All the evidence seems to suggest that the malams directing this branch of the Tijaniyya owed their allegiance to Ibrahim Niass of Senegal. Unlike the first wave of Tijaniyya activity which was confined to urban areas, the Niass branch gained most of its adherents from the rural Hausa who were engaged in groundnut production.<sup>29</sup> Thus, this second stream of Tijani propaganda embraced two distinct groups: the urban Hausa who were joined by discontented Fulani in common opposition to the monopoly symbolized by the Sardauna,

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<sup>27</sup> Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent", op. cit., p.345-357.

<sup>28</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.417.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p.286.

and the rural Hausa peasants who resented the exactions of the Fulani Native Authority officials.

With M.G. Smith's "Law of Structural Drift" as a point of departure we will try to show how increased Tijani activity from 1950 to 1966 was an indication that the categories traditionally utilised to bolster ideological acceptance of Fulani hegemony were no longer effective in achieving a consensus despite apparent uniformity in party alignment. The crises in the career of the Sardauna focus attention on the rivalry within the emirate system and the potentially centrifugal forces at work within the local Native Authority administrative structure.

Nevertheless, because of the theocratic cast of the political and social system in Northern Nigeria, any dissenting movement which challenged certain features of the status quo could marshal support only by appealing in some way or other to the ideological principles of Islam. Thus N.E.P.U., a "radical" political movement chose as its motto "To Glorify God, Association and Service to the Community".<sup>30</sup> The party also sought religious justification for its egalitarian program, stressing these passages from the Qur'an which showed an affinity to Christianity and Judaism. By so doing, it hoped to allay suspicion of its alliance with the southern-dominated N.C.N.C. (National Council of Nigerian Citizens).

Despite these efforts, the N.E.P.U. failed to gain any wide support and actually lost ground during the 1950's. Yet the cleavages within the system remained. Because these cleavages existed on different levels and, at the same time, had repercussions throughout the society it was

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<sup>30</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p.394.

impossible to attain political power merely by exploiting one level of cleavage while ignoring the political implications of another level.

For purposes of analysis three levels of cleavage can be defined:

1. The cleavage between rival emirs, especially between Sokoto and Kano.
2. The cleavage between the sarakuna and talakawa classes. This cleavage would be felt among Malams, merchants, intellectuals, and students who have little chance for advancement in the Native Authority structure because of their commoner background.
3. The cleavage between habe peasants and landlords (mainly Fulani and their agents). This cleavage is a refinement of (2) above.

The cleavages on levels (1) and (2) are urban based while the cleavage on level (3) is between rural farmers and urban based landlords. On the purely party-political level these cleavages are not apparent which explains the weakness of the N.E.P.U.

In 1949, Ibrahim Niass sent a mugaddam to Nigeria in order to strengthen Tijani organization in the area. The mission was quite successful, especially in Kano where, according to the British Governor of the North, Sir Bryan Sharwood-Smith "... the scenes of mass hysteria were so alarming in their import that Muslim leaders throughout the rest of the region determined that such a thing must never happen again."<sup>31</sup> Despite the opposition from certain quarters, communication between Niass and Nigeria continued unabated until 1951 when Niass made his first public appearance in Kano. At that time he prayed with his arms crossed which was a practice that distinguished the reformed Tijaniyya from the traditional Tijaniyya.<sup>32</sup> The rise in membership was dramatic

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<sup>31</sup> Sharwood-Smith, op. cit., p.329.

<sup>32</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.276.

during the 1950's, so much so, that large sectors of the population in the groundnut regions of Sokoto, Katsina, and Kano began to join the Tijaniyya. This increase in membership was at the expense of the Qadiriyya order and indirectly challenged the religious authority of the Sultan who was the head of the Qadiriyya. In 1949, the Sultan ordered the demolition of the Friday mosques erected by Tijanis.

As a result tension increased and acts of violence began to be reported in the press. The response from the Kano authorities was a spate of abusive propaganda directed against the Sultan and the Qadiriyya.<sup>33</sup>

While this dispute was raging, the N.E.P.U. began to attract a number of Tijani adherents and it seemed that there would be a formal alliance between the reformed Tijaniyya and the N.E.P.U. When arrests were made following the riots in Sokoto in 1956, many N.E.P.U. supporters went to Sokoto and deliberately courted arrest in order to fill the Sokoto jails thereby publicly embarrassing the Sultan.<sup>34</sup> In certain respects, the political grievances of the N.E.P.U. coincided with the populist religious ideology of the reformed branch of the Tijaniyya headed by Ibrahim Niass. Economic factors also brought the two groups together especially after the revolt of a number of habe villages against their Fulani-appointed headman. Evidence suggests that the outbreak was caused by a poor groundnut harvest which encouraged certain Tijani malams to preach open resistance to the exactions of the Native Authority officials.<sup>35</sup> Finally in 1963, events came to a head and the

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<sup>33</sup> In the Nigerian Citizen for May 16, 1956 four persons were reported killed in riots between Qadiris and Tijanis in Sokoto. See Paden, pp.413-415.

<sup>34</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.416.

<sup>35</sup> Sharwood-Smith, op. cit., p.330.

Sardauna achieved what traditional heads of the Fulani Empire had tried and failed to do — dethrone an Emir of Kano.

The Emir of Kano, al-Sanusi, had been closely associated with Ibrahim Niass, and under the latter's influence had dismissed all Qadiri and traditional Tijani advisers.<sup>36</sup> As a result, his administration became almost exclusively identified with the reformed branch of the Tijaniyya directed by Niass. Contrary to the usual practice of the Fulani emirs, al-Sanusi began to lead the public prayers on Friday and deliver the khutba (formal sermon) personally. In this way al-Sanusi proclaimed his ritual break with the rest of his fellow emirs with whom he had political differences. The Sardauna and the N.P.C. leaders realized the potential gravity of the situation since they feared that the N.E.P.U. might win over large numbers of the reformed Tijanis and so threaten the political monopoly of the N.P.C. In September 1962, D.J.M. Muffett became Commissioner into the financial affairs of the Kano Native Authority. At the conclusion of his investigation several high-ranking officials were dismissed including the Councillor for Health and Land, the Chief Alkali, and the Councillor for Education. Unable to resist mounting pressure from the Sardauna and other N.P.C. officials, the Emir finally capitulated and resigned.

The effect of al-Sanusi's resignation was felt immediately within the ranks of the Tijaniyya. Ibrahim Niass ordered his followers to continue to recognize al-Sanusi as the only legitimate leader of the

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<sup>36</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.279. By "traditional" Tijani is meant the first wave of Tijani affiliation in Nigeria. Most of these initiates belonged to the Fulani ethnic group, e.g. the Emirs of Katsona and Zaria. The second wave sparked by the agents of Niass was much more egalitarian and included habe initiates as well. Hence the reformed group led by Niass was often at odds with the traditionals who stood for the traditional Fulani system.



reformed Tijaniyya in Nigeria. On the political front, a new opposition party was formed called the Kano Peoples' Party (K.P.P.) with the expressed aim of reinstating the deposed Emir. The membership of this party was largely recruited from reformed Tijanis and merged with the N.E.P.U. in 1964.<sup>37</sup> The executive officers of the K.P.P. had been jailed for "abusing" the Sardauna and hence, the party turned to the N.E.P.U. for support. The alliance between the Niass group and the N.E.P.U. was confirmed when Aminu Kano, the leader of the N.E.P.U., flew to Kaolack for consultations with Ibrahim Niass.<sup>38</sup> In this way the Sardauna's position as paramount leader of the North was challenged by informal para-political alliances as well as by formal political opposition groups.

The emotive force of religious claims was revealed in the campaign posters of the N.P.C. and the N.E.P.U. during the 1964 elections. The campaign posters used by the N.P.C. showed photographs of the Sardauna with a diagrammatic rendering of his chain of spiritual and kinship descent from the prophet Muhammad. Aminu Kano, on the other hand, used a poster depicting himself receiving a "blessing" from Ibrahim Niass.<sup>39</sup>

But one thing was now certain. By forcing the abdication of the Emir of Kano, the Sardauna made it clear that his role overshadowed that of the most powerful emir. As N.P.C. President-General and as Prime Minister of the Northern Region, the Sardauna was gradually centralizing political authority to the detriment of the local Native Authorities headed by the emirs.

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<sup>37</sup> Paden, p. 504.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 338.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 560.

Nevertheless, within the government many high posts were filled by Tijanis. Of the twenty ministers in the northern cabinet from 1956 to 1961, nine were Tijanis whereas only two declared themselves to be Qadiris (the Sardauna and Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa). Similarly, out of sixty-three back benchers during the same period, twenty declared themselves Tijanis whereas seventeen declared themselves Qadiris. There is a definite polarization in representation from Sokoto and Kano. Almost all members of the Northern House of Assembly from Sokoto who admit membership in a brotherhood are Qadiris, while those from Kano are Tijanis. In addition members of the royal house of Zaria, Gwandu, Katsina, Bauchi, and Kazaure have declared their Tijani affiliation.<sup>40</sup>

The fact that a majority of the Emirs and their families who identified themselves with any brotherhood were Tijanis articulates in a "para-political manner" a centrifugal tendency in opposition to the centralizing process implied in the Sardauna's policy. Consequently, on this hierarchical level, membership in the Tijaniyya articulates a conservative, Fulani-backed movement which desired local autonomy for each emirate and which resisted the pretensions of the Sardauna and the Sokoto-based Qadiriyya order. This local opposition did not prevent cooperation with the N.P.C. on a wider political level where northern privileges were at stake. Hence the emirs as a body supported the campaign of the Sultan of Sokoto to extract as many concessions as possible from southern politicians before joining the Federation of Nigeria.

The second level of cleavage which Tijaniyya activity expressed was the class division of sarakuna and talakawa. Membership in the sarakuna

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<sup>40</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., pp.471 - 490.

class meant that acquisition of public office (sarauta) was comparatively easy. Since eligibility to compete for office was determined largely by heredity, the vast majority of citizens are barred from participation in this competition.<sup>41</sup> Hence public office was largely a preserve of the Fulani privileged class (masu sarauta) and their Hausa clients.

Whitaker divides these sarauta into three basic categories:

(1) the office of emir; (2) offices reserved to certain Fulani and Hausa nobles whose families were associated with the Fulani conquest; (3) those offices "in the gift" of the emir. This third category of offices could be awarded to dynastic members of the lineage, cognatic kin, clients, or slaves. Hence this category was the gateway to status for those members of the society who were at the bottom of the social scale. The late federal Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafewa Balewa, belonged to a slave family which rose through this means. The Prime Minister's father was a slave of the Ajiyan Bauchi and had the title of Shamaki, which designated those slaves of the emir's entourage who guarded the horses during battle. All three categories of office were obtained through the practice of gaisuwa (greeting) which entailed a sum of money to be handed over to one's patron. Whoever gave the most valuable gift, other things being equal, was invested with the office. This system was obviously a far cry from the religious idealism of Uthman dan Fodio.<sup>42</sup>

Many pious malams, imams, and alkalis tried to remain outside the system of competition for office. But such a policy meant that they, or their descendants would lose all social prestige and sink back into

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<sup>41</sup> M.G. Smith, Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria, op. cit., pp.93-95.

<sup>42</sup> See Whitaker, op. cit., pp.416 ff.

the ranks of the talakawa. To avoid this, three options were open to those individuals motivated by religious scruples who wished to lead a life more in conformity with the ideals preached by dan Fodio. They could (1) remain in the administration and try to maintain high standards of professional conduct; (2) they might join a new religious brotherhood; (3) they might emigrate. The second alternative, joining a brotherhood such as the Tijaniyya or the Mahdiyya seemed most attractive. Because of the political situation in the Sudan, joining the Mahdiyya risked incurring the suspicion of the British colonial authorities. Thus, the Tijaniyya became for these reform-minded Muslims a means of expressing their dissatisfaction with the sarauta system which violated the principles of the Fulani jihad. Hence, large numbers of civil servants were attracted to Tijani meetings (hadra) for communal prayer and recitation. The corporate bonds of the Tijaniyya "filled a need" which the more individualistic Qadiriyya could not, or did no longer meet. Besides, the Qadiriyya were compromised by being identified with the Fulani system.<sup>43</sup> In this way the Tijaniyya offered a community organization and an intellectual refuge for educated and pious talakawa and sarakuna whose number increased during the 1950's as educational opportunities became more available.

The third level of cleavage is operative principally in the rural sector of the population. On this level economic factors play a decisive role in sharpening habe antagonism to Fulani land owners. From 1950 on, the Northern Region has seen a significant rise in groundnut and cotton

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<sup>43</sup> See Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent in Hausaland", op. cit., p.354. See also A. Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, op. cit., p.156 on the fraternal bonds encouraged by the Tijaniyya.

production.<sup>44</sup> In addition, substantial numbers of Hausa peasants are involved in long distance trade. Involvement in this type of commercial activity has been on the distinguishing features of Hausa culture and itinerant Hausa merchants can be found in almost every major market centre from Timbuktu to Accra. By establishing a network of zangos (way stations), the Hausa have managed to maintain a monopoly of the Kola nut trade and are also engaged in supplying cattle to butchers in Ghana, Ivory Coast, and southern Nigeria.<sup>45</sup> The volume of this trade is considerable and the financial returns involved constitute a high percentage of the export economy of the emirates of Northern Nigeria.

The personnel engaged in this activity are mostly drawn from the lower strata of Hausa society. The Fulani and the sarakuna ruling class did not normally engage in trade since it is considered a demeaning occupation despite the profits obtained. Indeed, the Sarkuna voiced his contempt for mercantile activity when he criticized the efforts of European firms to win contracts from Northern ministers. "They (European merchants) do not realize that we are not traders or merchants and have no desire to be such . . . ."<sup>46</sup> Yet, ironically the surplus income of the merchants is often invested in maintaining the nobility at their accustomed standard of living. In this way, the merchants, although talakawa, find themselves in a position of great power because of their financial support of the sarakuna who are in their debt. However, the merchants are frequently prevented from directly exercising this power

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<sup>44</sup> See H.C. Kriesel, The Marketing of Groundnuts in Nigeria, Consortium for the Study of Nigerian Rural Development, (East Lansing, Michigan, 1968).

<sup>45</sup> See H. Miner, The Primitive City of Timbuktoo, (New York, 1965), p.65; A.Cohen, Custom and Politics, op. cit., pp.8-9.

<sup>46</sup> M. Bello, My Life, op. cit., p.160.

since they are barred from competing for office by reason of their class.<sup>47</sup>

In this cleavage between sarakuna and talakawa, economic factors play a decisive role. The rapid increase in the volume of groundnut and cotton production have changed the peasant economy and opened up new avenues to wealth and prestige for those who previously were deprived of participating in the political life of the Northern Region of Nigeria. The N.P.C. responded to this challenge by proposing candidates drawn from the mercantile class (attajirai) in those constituencies where N.E.P.U. opposition seemed likely to profit from the conflict between peasants and traders on the one hand, and the ruling Fulani aristocracy on the other. Thus the leading merchant in the Northern House of Assembly was Musa Gasash, a Tijani whose father was an Arab slave from Tripoli. Significantly, Gasash was given the post of Minister of Land and Survey in the Sardauna's cabinet.<sup>48</sup>

The economic position of the merchants coupled with the altered peasant economy, reoriented the traditional sarakuna-talakawa relationship. Patterns of protest began to emerge which threatened the structure upon which the regional government was based. It was in this context that the Reformed Tijaniyya heightened a sense of community cohesion on the part of the talakawa. This protest focussed on four areas of grievance: (1) the ethnic domination by the Fulani; (2) the feudal authority patterns which regulated the rural economy; (3) the alien authority represented by British rule; (4) the low socio-economic status accorded to the talakawa.

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<sup>47</sup> M.G. Smith, The Economy of the Hausa Communities of Zaria, pp.100-101.

<sup>48</sup> Paden, op. cit., pp.286 and 585.

In the case of Kano, the Reformed Tijaniyya, under the leadership of Ibrahim Niass, re-oriented the authority structure in the direction of increasing local autonomy. As the Tijaniyya became more and more powerful in Kano, the exercise of authority became rooted in the sub-system of the brotherhood itself. Thus, the Emir, al-Samusi exercised a double role. As emir, he was the representative of the traditional Fulani system and his authority was based on ethnic descent from the original jihad leaders of the early nineteenth century. At the same time, he was a muqaddam (ritual master) of the Tijaniyya, and as such his authority rested on the possession of baraka transmitted through Ibrahim Niass. In the dispute with Sokoto, it was the religious role which effectively mobilized public support, since the Tijaniyya in Kano embraced all ranks within the society.

In the changes brought about by economic and political development, following the Second World War, the egalitarian ethos of the Reformed Tijaniyya cross-cut the ethnic boundaries which had hitherto distinguished Fulani, Hausa, and Kanuri. Thus, Ibrahim Niass, a Senegalese Wolof of the blacksmith caste, became the dominant religious figure in Northern Nigeria and Niger.<sup>49</sup> In Kano city, the Tijani malams were recruited from all the major ethnic groups. The Emir, despite his Fulani background, became the spiritual leader of the great mass of habe peasants in his territory. Thus, the Reformed Tijaniyya became, in effect, a coalition of sarakuna and talakawa in common opposition to the policies of the Sardauna. Although the habe and the Emir were opposed to the

<sup>49</sup> Niass has also had extensive dealings with the Yoruba in Southern Nigeria. After curing the daughter of a wealthy, western-trained Lagos physician, his reputation among the Yoruba increased. One of the charges brought against Chief Awolowo was that he had paid Niass a bribe in order to get the marabout's public support. See Paden, op. cit., pp.312 and 1522-1525.

Sardauna for different reasons, this did not prevent an integration of Kano society eventually giving rise to a form of "Kano Nationalism." This nationalist sentiment was institutionalized through the Tijaniyya order whose organizational structure formed the framework of a new political entity. Thus Kano nationalist sentiment is analogous to the political ethnicity analysed by A. Cohen.<sup>50</sup> It is not surprising therefore, to discover that the religious authority of the Emir was increased after his deposition in 1963, when he received the title of Khalifa. Despite the fact that Sanusi was succeeded by his son, most observers realized that the deposed Emir still held the reins of power.

Instead of alleviating the situation, the Sardauna's policy with regard to Kano and the Reformed Tijaniyya only made matters worse. The fanatical wing of the Tijaniyya, known as yan wazifa ("adepts of the wazifa", the Tijani prayer ritual) began to stir up protests in other areas of the north. They were responsible for major riots in Yeldu district near Argungu in which eleven police were killed. The same group was implicated in peasant outbreaks in Jega and Kano in which a number of village heads and tax gatherers were killed.<sup>51</sup> As a result of the increasing violence, the Sardauna issued an order banning Niass from Nigeria. On June 18, 1965 the Council of Malams was convened by the Sardauna and after debating the issue, the Council ordered that Imams were not to pray with crossed arms while leading the Friday prayers. If any Imam refused to obey the order, he was to be dismissed. This was equivalent to banning all Imams of the Reformed

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<sup>50</sup> See A. Cohen, Custom and Politics, op. cit., pp.201-211.

<sup>51</sup> Paden, op. cit., p.417; Whitaker, op. cit., pp.255-256.



Tijaniyya who crossed their arms at prayer in order to distinguish themselves from the Qadiriyya and traditional Tijaniyya Imams.

The Sardauna made several gestures to win over the disaffected Tijanis. During a widely publicised visit to Senegal, he had a meeting with Seydou Nourou Tall, the Tokolor Tijani leader. In the course of his speech delivered on that occasion the Sardauna pointed out that the great Tijani reformer and jihadist, al-Hajj Umar had lived at the court of Sokoto and had married a daughter of Muhammad Bello. However, this gesture failed to win over those Tijanis who were disciples of Ibrahim Niass. Finally, the Sardauna proposed the foundation of a new religious order which would comprise Qadiri and Tijani malams and would be named after the Shehu Uthman dan Fodio. However this new brotherhood, the Uthmaniyya, was still-born. In any case the ritual exclusiveness of the Tijaniyya forbids joining any other Muslim brotherhood.<sup>52</sup>

In any event political and religious disaffection had become too deep rooted to be solved by such facile, albeit ingenious schemes. Despite the increasing centralization brought about by the Sardauna's manipulation of the N.P.C. and his defeat of the Emir of Kano, the days of his hegemony were numbered. It only remained for the political upheaval of 1966 to put an end to the Fulani monopoly of the Northern political system.

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<sup>52</sup> See Last, "Aspects of Administration and Dissent", op. cit., p.354; Paden, op. cit., p.1517.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the process whereby Sufi brotherhoods influenced the direction and shape of social change in Senegal and Northern Nigeria. Although both regions had been in contact with Muslim traders and missionaries for several centuries, large numbers of peasants remained marginally committed to the tenets of Islam. During the nineteenth century, however, Muslim warriors of the Tokolor torobe caste became more active and under the aegis of the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya orders they attempted to set up Muslim states throughout the sahel region of the Western Sudan. In Nigeria, the jihād of Uthman dan Fodio resulted in the creation of the Sokoto Empire which embraced much of the region formerly ruled by the Hausa city states. In Senegal and Mali, the states set up by the Tijani marabout al-Hajj Umar came into conflict with French designs on the area. In both regions therefore, the process of political consolidation was closely connected with the activity of the Sufi brotherhoods.

Muslim holy men and teachers of the torobe caste had been living in an uneasy symbiosis with their chiefly patrons in Senegal and Hausaland. This tenuous relationship was altered when the Muslim holy men came under the influence of the reform movements which eventually gave rise to open war against pagan or semi-Muslim rulers. However a second crucial factor in the process of political and religious change was the advent of the colonial powers. Faced with a common enemy, the traditional rulers allied themselves with the ever more powerful Muslim holy men in order to mobilize the population against the new enemy.

In Senegal the military association between marabouts and chiefs resulted in marital alliances between torobe families and royal lineages. Thus, when the rulers of the Wolof states were deposed or killed in battle and the Wolof had become an acephalous people, the marabouts, fortified by baraka, became the heirs of the traditional leaders. The marabouts became the nuclei of new political groupings through a process which French observers have termed the "Wolofization" of Islam. This religious change was consolidated by the agricultural initiative sponsored by the sufi leaders. Devotion and zeal were made visible through working the land. In this way production became a concrete expression of the efficacy of religious adherence to the Tijaniyya or Muridiyya orders. This program of the brotherhoods in Senegal coincided with the French colonial policy of encouraging exports of groundnuts and groundnut by-products.

The leaders in this agricultural revolution were the shaikhs of the Muridiyya order whose disciples had in large part been recruited from the tyeddo or warrior class of the Wolof. The tyeddo had originally been slaves of the Damel and were used to keep the peasant population under control. The tyeddo formed the nucleus of the dara plantation system and made it the effective means of Muridiyya expansion. Before long the example of the Muridiyya shaikhs was followed by their Tijani and Qadiri counterparts. As a result, the groundnut trade, which was Senegal's major source of income, was largely in the hands of the leaders of the three dominant religious orders.<sup>1</sup> This agricultural monopoly was protected by a network of institutions and rituals

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<sup>1</sup> See Ibrahima Fall, "L'Economie de l'Arachide dans les Etats de l'Ouest Africain", Doc. C.H.E.A.M. No.3515 (1961), p.21.

which perpetuated the religious motivation of the rank and file. Thus the rituals associated with the Murid Magal and the Tijani Gamou reflected on a wider scale the communal dhikr which is a feature of all sufi brotherhoods.

The emphasis on communal ritual has resulted in a gradual breakdown of ethnic particularism in Senegal. This is most marked in the urban context where Tijani and Murid religious meetings are conducted mainly in Wolof. As a result, the migrant Tokolor and Serer in Dakar and Kaolack were gradually assimilated into the Wolof ethnic group through their attendance at the haara and dhikr ceremonies. The increasing tendency toward homogenization reduces the likelihood of ethnic factionalism which would endanger the position of the brotherhood elites. Even in the case of the Dakar Mosque dispute, there was no overt appeal to ethnic sensibility on the part of the Tokolor. The fact that the Hbacke and Sy families were both of Tokolor origin prevented the Tall family from raising the ethnic issue. In any case intermarriage among the leading holy lineages hastens the process of homogenization on the part of the brotherhood elites.

Assimilation between Hausa and Fulani in Northern Nigeria was prevented by the administrative structure of Fulani rule. Even though the Fulani rulers had given up their language and had for several generations taken Hausa women for wives, they nevertheless maintained their ethnic exclusiveness by erecting an elaborate system of court etiquette and ceremonial which emphasized their right to rule.<sup>2</sup> This policy tended to isolate the ruling sarakuna class from the commercial and agricultural changes which gradually altered

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<sup>2</sup> M.G. Smith, Economy of the Hausa Communities of Zaria, op. cit., p.92.

the status of certain talakawa merchants. Despite the fact that the talakawa traders had amassed considerable fortunes, they were unable to obtain high political office because of their Hausa background.

In the rural sector the Hausa farmers became increasingly aware of the financial stakes involved in the export trade in groundnut and cotton which had become the leading export commodities of the Northern Region. In this situation of economic awareness the farmers began to question the right of the tax collectors (jekadu) to demand a proportion of the harvest on behalf of the Fulani aristocrats. As a result the tension between Hausa farmers and Fulani landlords became particularly acute causing the farmers to ally themselves with urban-based merchants who were also restive under the Fulani political system. Finally the class of literate malams united the farmers and merchants into an informal religious organization which cut across occupational and status lines. The majority of these reformist malams belonged to the reformed Tijaniyya which owed obedience to shaikh Ibrahim Niass of Senegal.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, on the one hand, the egalitarian ethos of the reformed Tijaniyya gave rise to a sense of community cohesion between urban and rural Hausa. On the other hand, in Kano, the long-standing political rivalry between the Sokoto and Kano dynasties was given a religious tinge when the Emir of Kano, al-Sanusi opted for the reformed Tijaniyya. Hence, the reformed Tijaniyya in Kano united rural Hausa, urban talakawa, and Fulani sarakuna. In effect allegiance to the Tijaniyya order became an expression of Kano nationalism. Through their adherence

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<sup>3</sup> See G. Nicolas, et. al., "Etude Socio-Economique de deux Villages Hausa", op. cit., p.136.

to the reformed Tijaniyya, the three major groups in Kano shared a system of communication which J. Paden, following L. Pye and S. Verba, has termed a "Political Culture". According to Verba, the political culture of a society consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which define the situation in which political action takes place. Political Culture provides the subjective orientation to politics.<sup>4</sup>

This subjective orientation was achieved in Kano through the interpersonal relationships generated by intense participation in Tijaniyya rituals. Thus, the Emir of Kano, by leading the Friday Prayer and delivering the khutba or sermon, broke with Fulani custom which had diminished the role of the emirs in communal worship. In a very real sense the Emir of Kano proclaimed his solidarity with his fellow Tijanis who were his brothers in religion. The emirs of the other city-states could not count on this unanimity of religious sentiment and so they seldom participated in public prayers lest they might encounter outbreaks of protest. Thus, there were no bonds of community which united them and their subjects in a common ritual experience.<sup>5</sup> Alice Dewey has described how such rituals of solidarity have broken down social barriers in Java. The slametan or ritual feast has created a structural relationship among individuals who otherwise do not belong to the same corporate group.<sup>6</sup> In similar fashion the dining companies described by Abner Cohen among the Tijanis of Ibadan united different sub-groups among the immigrant Hausa.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See S. Verba, "Comparative Political Culture", in L. Pye and S. Verba (eds.) Political Culture and Political Development (Princeton, 1969), p.513.

<sup>5</sup> M.G. Smith, Economy of the Hausa Communities of Zaria, op. cit., p.92.

<sup>6</sup> A.G. Dewey, "Ritual as a Mechanism for Urban Adaptation", Man, vol. 5, new series, No.3 (1970), pp.438-448.

<sup>7</sup> A. Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, op. cit., p.157.

In Senegal and Nigeria the mediators between hitherto separate or conflicting groups were the marabouts or malams who created bonds of confidence between new partners in a changing social situation.<sup>8</sup> By projecting their message on a universal plane, they demonstrated that their authority and power symbolized by baraka, transcended the narrow limits of ethnic or geographic particularism. Leadership and authority were not to be allotted only in terms of ethnic identity or class membership. Religious criteria began to play a paramount role in community relations and tariqa allegiance expressed the political and social tensions within the Wolof and Hausa ethnic groups. In this structural situation Muslim ritual became in Leach's words "a language of argument in terms of which claims to rights and status are expressed".<sup>9</sup>

The role of the brotherhoods was closely connected with the development of the rural economy in the two regions. In Senegal vast tracts of land were left open to colonization after the abolition of the rights of the lamans. Hence, the marabouts assumed the task of directing their disciples to settle in these open tracts and to form daras or collective farms. This colonization was encouraged by the French in order to increase groundnut exports. In this way the marabouts became the informal leaders of the Wolof ethnic group.

In Nigeria, the Hausa peasants were little affected by the imposition of British rule in 1903. As late as 1957 the vast majority of peasants in the Northern Region continued to hold and use land in much the same way as their forefathers of pre-British times. This

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<sup>8</sup> See Paden, op. cit., p.585.

<sup>9</sup> See Leach, Political Systems of Highland Burma (Boston, Beacon Press, 1965), p.278.

meant that control of the family land and communal land was vested in the Native Authority Administration headed by the Fulani emirs. In addition the emirs continued to collect dues and taxes.<sup>10</sup> As a result many peasants turned to trade or craft in order to supplement their incomes. For centuries Hausa traders have plied their wares throughout a far-flung network of market settlements (Zango) which are found in almost every sizeable settlement from Timbuktu to Accra. Indeed the commercial ventures of the Hausa have given rise to a distinct group of attajirai (Hausa: merchants), many of whom are members of the Tijaniyya brotherhood. Some of the attajirai have become quite wealthy but despite their possession of arziqi (social prestige), they can never become masu sarauta, eligible for office which is reserved to the Fulani. No matter how wealthy or successful a Hausa merchant might be, his political role is limited to that of a client.<sup>11</sup>

With the coming of independence and the broadening of the franchise, the Fulani rulers had to face a new complex of problems if they were to maintain their position. The Hausa peasants began to question the policies of the Native Authority structure. However, because the peasants were still under the control of the jekadu and other agents of the Fulani system, they could not organize themselves into a formal political opposition movement without incurring serious disabilities. Thus, the failure of the N.E.P.U. to unseat the N.P.C. was largely due to the latter's monopoly of political patronage. Nevertheless, Tijani malams became valuable links between the urban-based N.E.P.U. leaders

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<sup>10</sup> See C.K. Meek, op. cit., pp.111-112.

<sup>11</sup> See M.G. Smith, Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria, op. cit., pp.14-16; also R. Cohen, "Power, Authority and Personal Success in Islam and Bornu", in Swartz, Turner, and Tuden (eds.) Political Anthropology (Chicago, 1966), pp.129-138.



and the rural Hausa. Recent studies indicate that rural dissatisfaction was quite intense erupting into violence at times. Here again the Tijani disciples of Ibrahim Niass were usually blamed for instigating the riots.<sup>12</sup>

In Kano Emirate the majority of the population had become affiliated with the reformed Tijaniyya whose activity had been openly critical of the Fulani emirs. The Sardauna of Sokoto realized that if the situation were not checked, the wealthiest of the emirates would slip out of the Fulani orbit. His efforts to stem the tide only sharpened the differences between Sokoto and Kano. By the time the Sardauna had the Emir of Kano deposed, the criteria for the exercise of power in Kano had shifted from genealogical descent to sufistic affiliation. Despite the Emir's deposition, he still retained the loyalty and devotion of the people of Kano.

The agents responsible for this shift in the criteria for the exercise of authority were the malams of the Reformed Tijaniyya. Through their various activities as preachers, healers, counsellors, and diviners the malams had penetrated all ranks and classes of Hausa society. In certain areas they had gained the confidence of the Fulani sarakuna when the latter were at odds with administration which was the case at Kano. In the rural sector disciples of Ibrahim Niass were active in encouraging corporate activity based on membership in the Tijaniyya brotherhood. These groups of Hausa farmers began to contact their fellow Tijanis among the attajirai living in the urban centres in order to find middlemen to ship and process their produce. This cooperation between

<sup>12</sup> See al-Hajj Hamidu Alkali, "The Mahdi of Toranke", Kano Studies, Vol. I, No.4 (1960), pp.92-95.

merchants and farmers threatened the monopoly enjoyed by the Northern Region Marketing Boards which were controlled by the Native Authority Administration.<sup>13</sup>

In effect, the Reformed Tijaniyya united three major groups:

(1) Hausa farmers who resented the exactions of Fulani landlords and the policies of the Marketing Boards; (2) Merchants and educated clerks who resented the sarakuna monopoly of patronage; (3) Disgruntled members of the Fulani aristocracy who had lost out in the scramble for offices. The machinery of the Native Authority structure had become too rigid and bureaucratic to break down popular discontent and curb the activity of the Tijani malams.

The aggressive policies of the Sardauna tended to isolate the Northern Administration from the political and social changes which had resulted from economic growth. In this situation the informal organization of the Tijaniyya was able to spread not only in the Northern Region but also in the Hausa migrant communities. Whereas the Christian Senghor was able to win the cooperation of the Muslim leaders in Senegal, the Sardauna, on the contrary, was unable to win over the Tijani malams since his position as leader of the Qadiriyya rendered him suspect in Tijani eyes. The Qadiriyya had long been identified with the Sokoto dynasty and therefore it had little appeal for the mass of Hausa peasants. Despite the Sardauna's attempts to form a sufi order which would bridge the gap between Fulani rulers and the discontented elements of the population, it became increasingly evident that the religious claims of the Sardauna were no longer taken very seriously. Hence, the impressive

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<sup>13</sup> See H.C. Kriesel, Marketing of Groundnuts in Nigeria, op. cit., passim.

electoral results of the N.P.C. did not indicate the extent of the dissatisfaction felt by the Hausa peasants since there was no formal way of expressing dissent. The opposition leaders of the N.E.P.U. were imprisoned and their followers soon saw that the disabilities incurred through support of N.E.P.U. far outweighed possible gains. It remained for outside elements to put an end to the political monopoly of the N.P.C. When the Sardauna and the political system he represented passed from the scene there was very little sign of public mourning.<sup>14</sup>

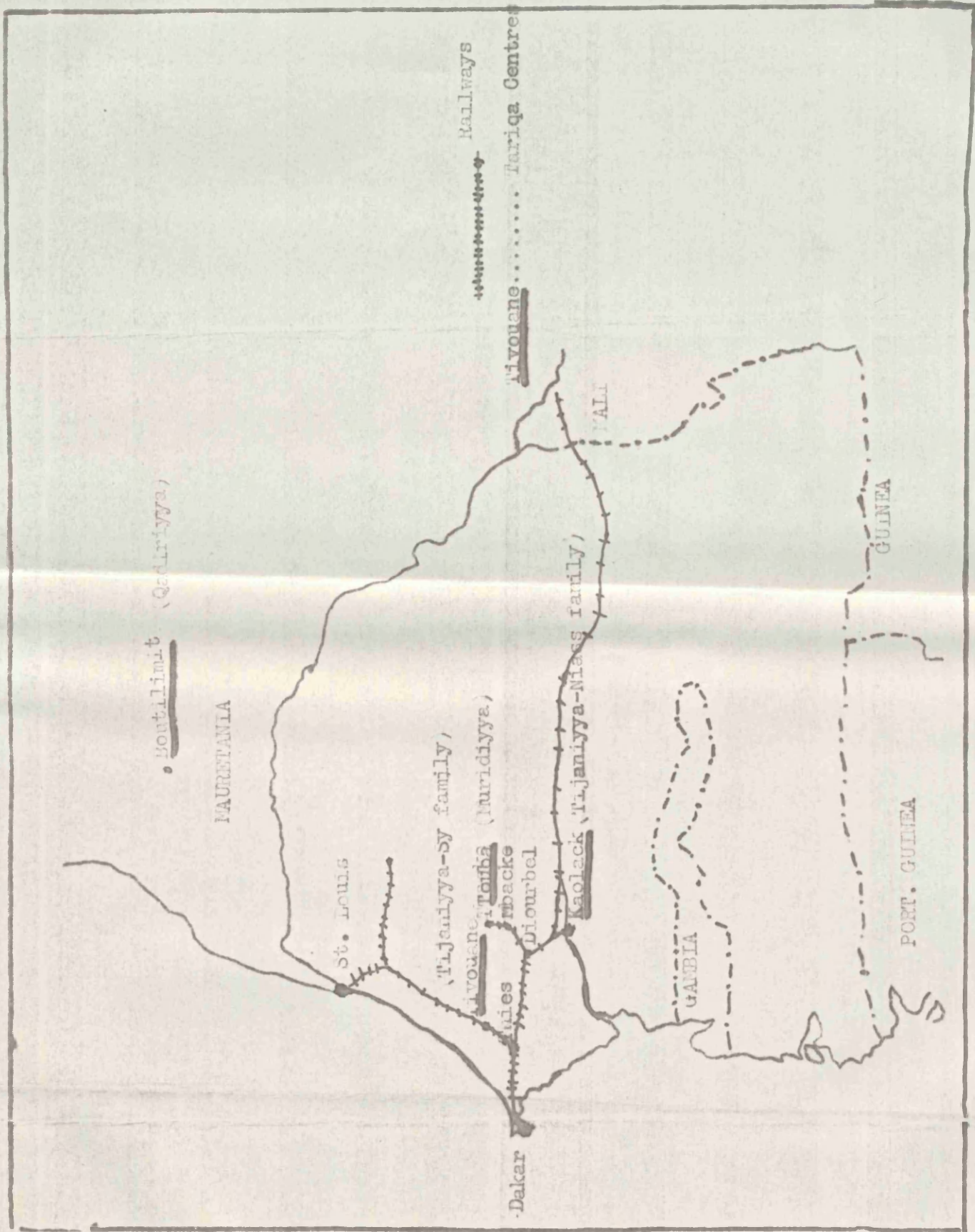
Thus, in both Senegal and Northern Nigeria the spread of the sufi brotherhoods was symptomatic of changes in the formal political system. Because of the different structural situation in the two regions, the brotherhoods developed along divergent lines. In Senegal the elimination of the traditional political system enabled the Muslim holy men to assume the positions of authority vacated by the kings of the Wolof states and the lamans. In Nigeria the British policy of Indirect Rule helped to bolster the position of the Fulani who had conquered the Hausa states in the name of Islam. The granting of independence forced the Fulani rulers to demand special privileges as part of the price for the Northern Region's acceptance of the Federal Constitution. The granting of these privileges to the Fulani Muslim rulers only served to preserve the rigid system of ranks and classes. As a result, the gap between Fulani rulers and Hausa subjects was widened. The sudden growth of the Reformed Tijaniyya order during the 1950's in Northern Nigeria expressed the discontent and unease felt by Hausa merchants and farmers who resented the arbitrary power exercised by the Native Authority

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<sup>14</sup> The Head of the N.E.P.U., al-Hajji Aminu Kano, the Sardauna's major opponent is now Minister of Health in the Gowon Government.

Administration under the control of the Fulani emirs. The domination of political activity by the sarakuna lineages had become an anachronism in a period marked by considerable economic and social change. The Tijaniyya order was an informal organization which expressed not only Hausa religious aspirations but also popular disenchantment with the Fulani system personified by the policies of the Sardauna of Sokoto. Even if the army coup of 1966 had not removed the Sardauna by violent means, the imposing edifice of Fulani power would have crumbled under the strains introduced by the demands of the new elites for social and political reform.

The spread of the Tijaniyya movement in Northern Nigeria was symptomatic of the new social and political realities which affected Hausaland in the post-independence period. Indeed, the forced resignation of the Emir of Kano revealed the extent of Tijani penetration of the Fulani ranks. By cross-cutting ethnic and class boundaries, Reformed Tijaniyya became a potent factor in the resurgence of Hausa political activity in the post-independence period. The Reformed Tijaniyya in Nigeria became agents in the extension of the Hausa language and culture, just as their counterparts in Senegal have furthered Wolof expansion.

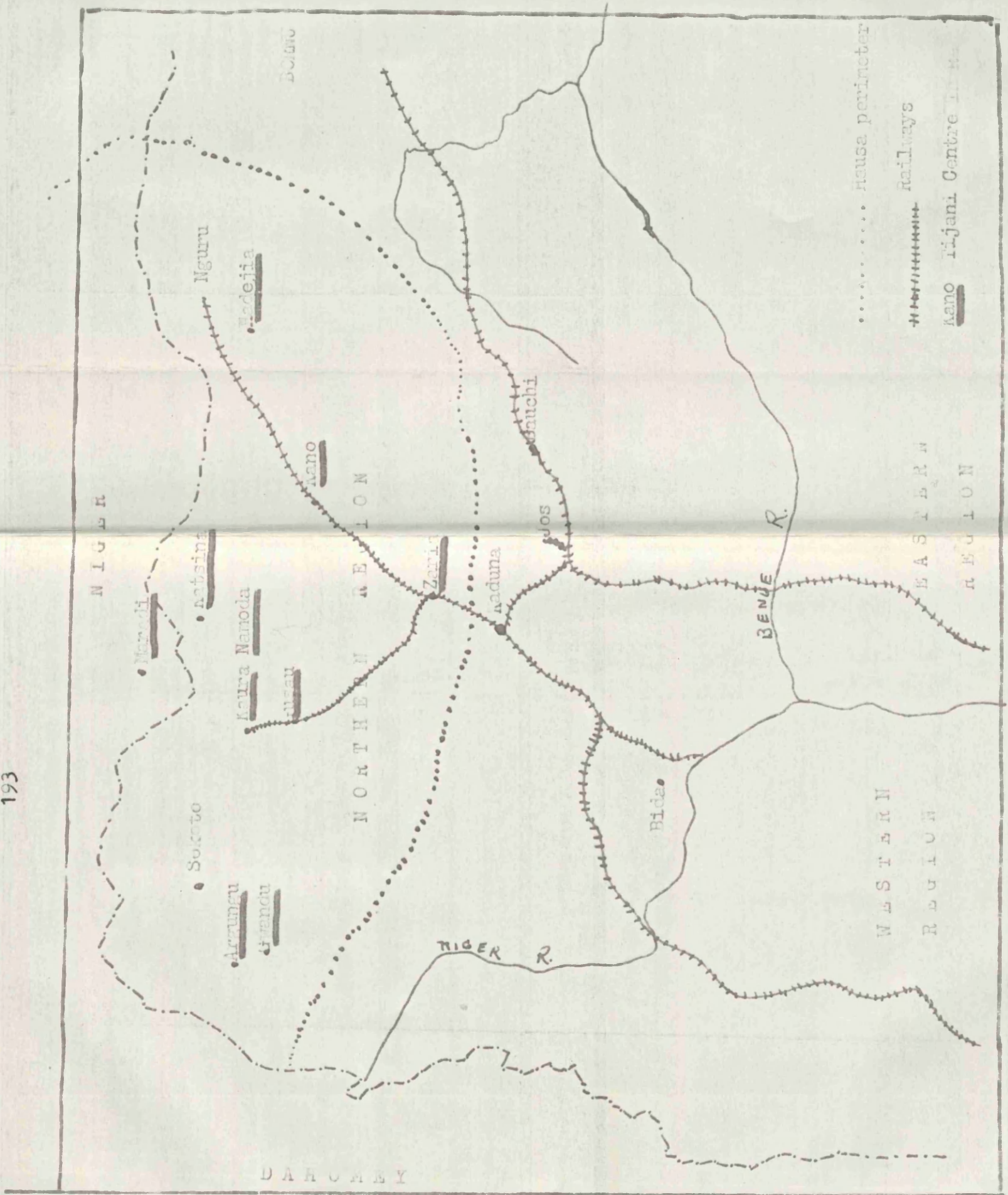


MAP OF SENEGAL SHOWING BROTHERHOOD CENTRES









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